



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

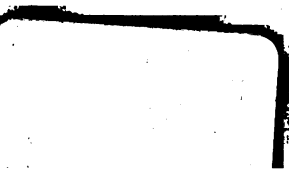
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

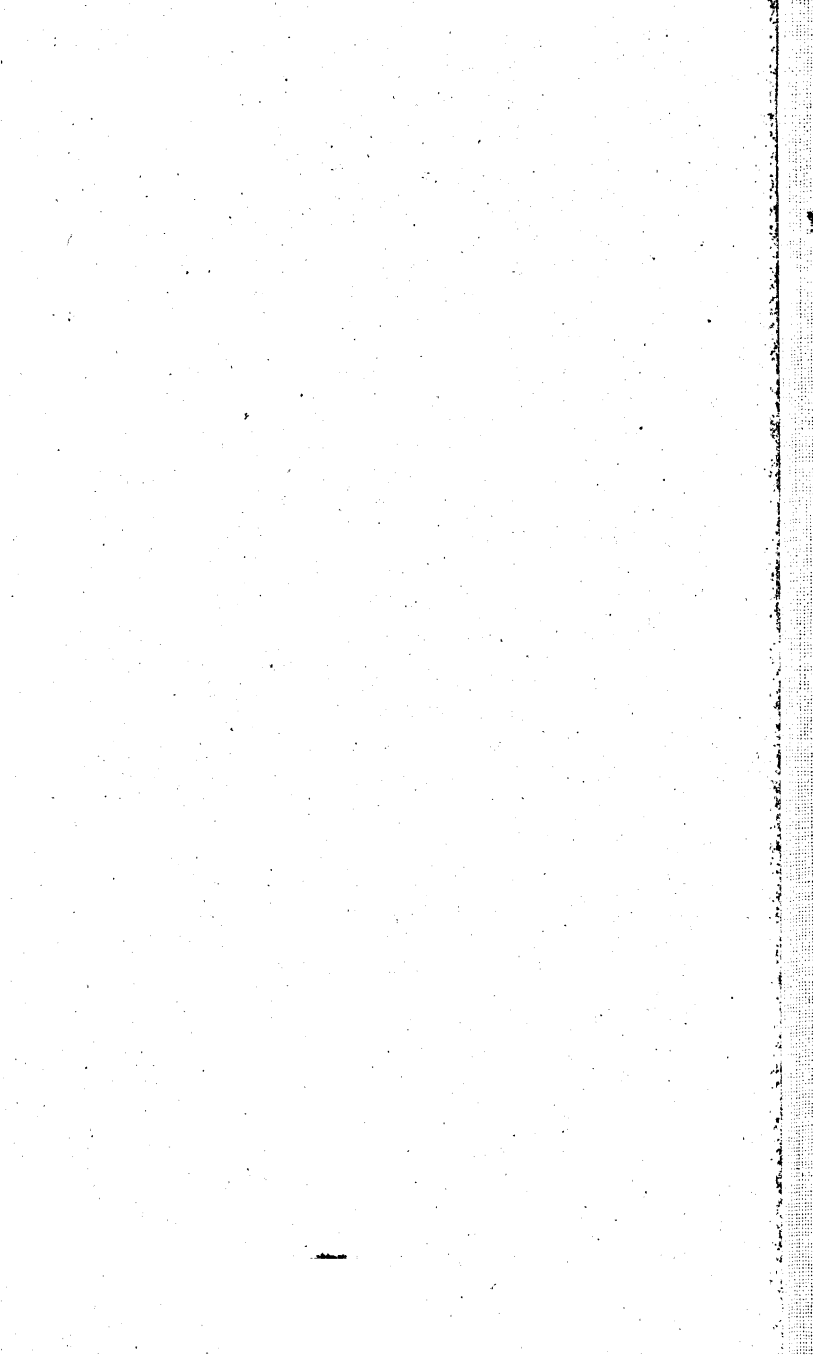
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

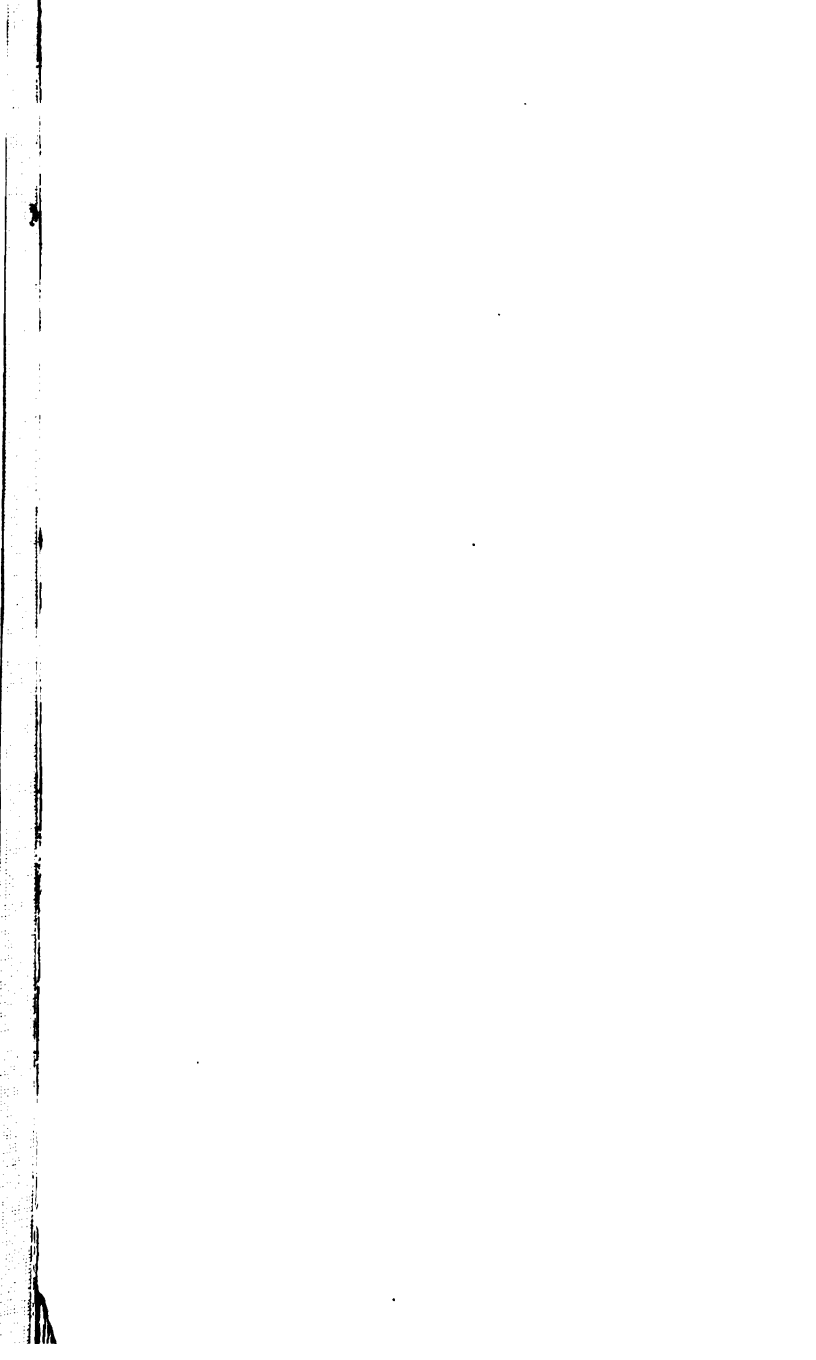
### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>











# PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC.

BY

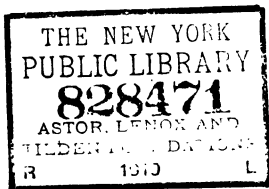
JOHN BASCOM,

PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC IN WILLIAMS COLLEGE; AUTHOR OF  
"ÆSTHETICS, OR SCIENCE OF BEAUTY," ETC.

---

BOSTON:  
CROSBY AND AINSWORTH,  
117 WASHINGTON STREET.

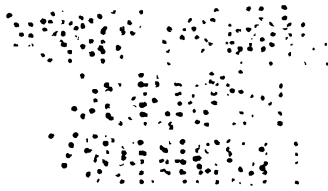
1866



Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865, by

JOHN BASCOM,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.



STEREOTYPED AT THE  
BOSTON STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY,  
*No. 4 Spring Lane.*



## P R E F A C E .

---

THERE is much seeming boldness in offering a new work on Rhetoric. Few subjects have received so much attention from so many able writers. The following treatise has arisen from considerable experience in instruction. It aims to be what it is entitled, a PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC, giving the principles as well as the rules on which excellence depends. The discussions present the mental and moral laws of influence. The work is chiefly designed for the later years of collegiate instruction. A simple rhetoric of rules prepares the beginner for his earlier efforts: afterward, when the nature and difficulties of the

task are better understood, he is ready for a somewhat more extensive and philosophical discussion of the principles it involves. A complete and succinct statement of these is the object of this work, and it is designed to take, in a course of training, a later position, such as is assigned Whately or Campbell.

# CONTENTS.

---

## INTRODUCTION.

|  | PAGE. |
|--|-------|
| Science, Art, Definitions of. — Relations of. — Principles. — Rules. — Skill. — Rhetoric, what. — Its Relations to Arts and Sciences. — Its Philosophy, what. — Four Steps. — Relations of Rules to Nature, to Genius, to Success, . . . . . | 9-20  |

## BOOK I. Ends.

### CHAPTER I.

#### DEPARTMENTS OF COMPOSITION.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| No Composition aimless. — Leading Aims. — Three Departments of Composition. — Relation of the Understanding, Emotions, and Will. — Historic Progress. . . . . | 21-27 |
|---|-------|

### CHAPTER II.

#### PROSE.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Double Office of. — History. — Philosophy. — Novel. — Prose allows no distinct Form. . . . . | 28-31 |
|--|-------|

### CHAPTER III.

#### POETRY.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Rhetoric includes Poetry; why? — Kind of Emotions called forth. — Its Relations to Metre; to Esthetics. . . . . | 32-35 |
|---|-------|

### CHAPTER IV.

#### ORATORY.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Its End. — This defines the Means. — Relation to Hearers; to Speaker. — Divisions of. — Three Sources of Impulse. — The Right, Emotions |  |
|---|--|

sustaining it. — Pleasure, Emotions giving Rise to it. — Interest. — Its Emotions. — Pulpit Oratory. — Advantages. — Difficulties. — Address to the Individual. — To the Assembly collectively. — Deliberative Oratory. — Eloquence of the Bar. . . . . 36-52

## BOOK II. Means.

Two Kinds. — Division especially applicable to Oratory. . . . . 53, 54

### CHAPTER I.

#### LAW OF INFLUENCE.

Relation of the Individual to others. — Law of Influence that of Right. — Obligation of Speaker to himself; to others. — Necessary to Success. — Nature of Oratory. . . . . 55-62

### CHAPTER II.

#### ARGUMENTS.

Sources of Proof, two: Intuition, Experience. — Four Forms of Intuitive Proof. — Experience. — Connections on which it proceeds. — Fallacies. — Testimony, two Kinds: of Fact, of Opinion. — The two confounded. — Calculation of Chances. — Proof either Intuitive or Rationative. — Argument's Inductive or Deductive. — Character of each. — Principles which determine the Choice and Arrangement of Arguments. — Burden of Proof. — Different Forms of Oratory. — Treatment of Opponent. — Answering Objections. — Importance of Argument. . . . . 63-94

### CHAPTER III.

#### EMOTIONS.

Relation of. — Sympathy, Office of. — Estimate of Speaker's Character. — Sects and Parties. — Office of Introduction. — Qualities which win Sympathy. — Effect on Orator. — Kinds of Feeling to be used by Orator. — How secured. — Growth of Feeling. — How remove adverse Feeling. — Two States interfering with Success. . . . . 95-112

### CHAPTER IV.

#### IMAGINATION AND MEMORY.

Instrumental Faculties. — Imagination, Source of vivid Ideas, of Conviction. — Sources of Imagery. — Memory. — Importance. — Method of Employment. . . . . 113-118

## CHAPTER V.

## WIT, HUMOR, AND RIDICULE.

Definitions.—The Resemblance in Wit.—Habit of Mind to which it gives Rise.—Its Office.—Ridicule.—Its Office. . . . 119-124

## CHAPTER VI.

## LAWS OF LANGUAGE.

Relations of Language to Thought.—Growth of Language.—Leading Constituents.—Change in Words.—Their Meaning.—Their figurative Force.—Philosophy.—Use.—Qualities of.—Purity.—Propriety.—Why regard these Qualities.—Permanence.—Symmetry.—Intelligibility.—How Use established.—Divided Use.—Canons. . . . . 125-151

## CHAPTER VII.

## BARBARISM.

Kinds.—Foreign Words.—Provincialisms.—Vulgarisms.—Obsolete Words.—Compounds.—Rules for Formation. . . . . 152-158

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SOLECISM AND IMPROPRIETY.

Solecism, what.—Arrangement.—Marks of Declension.—Frequent Solecisms.—The Verb.—Moods.—Tenses.—Passive Forms.—Conjunctions.—Improprieties.—Synonymes.—Plurals.—Effect of Solecisms; of Improprieties. . . . . 159-178

## BOOK III. Methods.

## CHAPTER I.

## STYLE.

Style, what.—Kinds.—Qualities.—Perspicuity.—Elegance.—Energy.—Relation of these to each other; to Mind; to Composition. . . 179-184

## CHAPTER II.

## PERSPICUITY.

Importance of.—Relation to Capacity; to Subject.—Dependence on Honesty; on Discipline; on the Choice of End; of Means.—Divisions.—Comparisons.—Objects of.—Antithesis.—Choice of

Words. — Drollery. — Common Life. — Anglo-Saxon. — Number of Words. — Arrangement. — Adverbs. — Pronouns. — Perspicuity, relative. — Not always needed in full Degree. . . . . 185-206

### CHAPTER III.

#### ELEGANCE.

What. — Dependence on Emotions. — Relation to various Kinds of Composition. — Exercise, in Nature, in Society, in Literature. — Relation between Style and Subject; between the Parts and the Whole. — Proportion. — Relation between the Discourse and the Circumstances and Persons. — Relation to the Speaker. . . . . 207-222

### CHAPTER IV.

#### ENERGY.

Dependence on the Desires; on the Will; on Virtue; on the Distinctness of the End. — Three Forms: Strength, Vivacity, Vigor. — Qualities of Thought. — Thoroughness. — Rapidity. — Directness. — Directness, how lost, by Philosophical, by Poetical Excellence. — Choice of Words. — Speciality. — Strength of Words. — Asseverations. — Epithets. — Number of Words. — Tautology. — Pleonasm. — Verbosity. — Arrangement. — Period. — Loose Sentence. — Figures. — Tropes. — Delivery. . . . . 223-248

## INTRODUCTION.

---

SCIENCES and arts, though closely related, are in themselves quite distinct. This difference we need to understand for the right apprehension of either. A science has reference to an intellectual end; an art, to a practical end: the one informs and gratifies the mind by a knowledge of the real character and dependence of things; the other guides and fortifies life in their use and government. A science is a stricter form of knowing; or, accurately, it is a department understood in its facts and laws. The impulse of knowledge which belongs to mind urges it ever to inquire, What is? and, Why it is? And these questions fully and wisely answered give science.

An art is the application of knowledge — is that system of rules by which we reach a practical end. Not every

end is so fixed or inclusive as to involve any methods of action, any determinate means, the mastery of which makes the artisan. Around all the general and settled pursuits of life, however, are clustered guiding precepts ; and these constitute the arts.

Art must precede science ; since the wants of life arise at once, and before that leisure is secured which is the condition of inquiry and accurate knowledge.

The imperfect and inaccurate information involved in the rudiments of art and civilized life will not be ripened into science, till, the appetites of the body in a measure appeased, the mind can secure attention to its own wants. This step, however, once taken, the sciences are established on their own footing, and henceforward take the lead. The rules of art become the scholiums of knowledge—the application of its principles. The foundation of a complete and broad control of Nature is laid in an extensive understanding of her forces. Art can hardly reach any high point till adopted of science, and taken under her instruction. Though our inferior, physical life is immediate and importunate in its claims ; it can be lifted into broad, abundant, and safe enjoyments only as it is endowed with the mastery, and protected by the guidance, of the intellect.



Skill arises from a practical familiarity with rules. It is the acquisition by muscle and mind of the quickness, the ease, which arise from habit. Both mind and body are greatly dependent for rapidity and precision of action on practice. To this the artisan and orator owe their facility and power of execution. The acquisition of skill in any art is what is usually understood by learning that art. As skill arises from a transfer of action from the slow and hesitating movements of thought to the quick mechanical movements of habit, from a conscious effort to an unconscious power, it depends wholly on familiarity, on a protracted use of rules. This is as true in higher as in lower art; of the artist as of the artisan. Elegance of manners, ease of expression, and even the highest virtue, arise from forgetfulness of rules in their perfect and unconscious application. Facility of execution we may expect, therefore, to find associated with rules; and this will be all the greater, because of their limited application.

A principle as involving a law of nature, as stating a condition under which all action takes place, is to be distinguished from a rule. The one is a specific direction by which a given end is reached; the other, a statement of that method or order of Nature to which

any of her phenomena are conformed. A knowledge of principles is requisite for understanding the reason of rules ; for fertility and fulness of resources in meeting untried exigencies ; for the subjugation of new forces in nature, and their varied application beyond the stretch of limited experience. Principles give us scope and power in device ; rules, ease and perfection in execution. Principles belong to science ; rules, to art. Invention is dependent on both — on a knowledge of the conditions under which natural forces act, and on that ingenuity and manipular skill by which those conditions are met, and power is successfully applied to the production of a given result. There may be much good work within an art with little mastery of its principles ; there can be no thorough knowledge of an art, or great power to develop its resources, without tracing its rules to the laws on which they depend.

Every art stands in intimate relations with one or more sciences, that furnish the principles which govern and explain its operations. Every combination of machinery is to be understood by the mechanical powers employed — the measurements of carpentry by the solutions of geometry which they involve ; the enjoyments of poetry and oratory by the laws of the human mind

under which they arise. A single science, like that of chemistry, may render its aid to many arts, and a single art, like that of agriculture, may receive assistance from the most various forms of knowledge. Thought and action are inextricably interwoven, and sustain each other at a thousand points.

The philosophy of an art is the reference of its rules to their appropriate principles. The mind is never satisfied till all its action becomes rational; that is, till it has explained to itself the reasons on which it rests. The mind thus assumes that supervision and government which belong to it. Art is made amenable to science, and science tests its power by expounding and guiding art.

Rhetoric is an art. It strives to render aid to action, to prescribe its methods. What is the action whose rules are furnished by rhetoric? It is the mind's action, we answer, in communicating itself, its thoughts, conceptions, feelings, through language. There has been a general tendency to limit rhetoric to direct address — oratory, so called. We cannot regard this as desirable, since, in that case, we must have an additional art to guide the mind in other forms of composition — an art, the body of whose precepts must be identical with those

already given in rhetoric. Expression of thought in language in all its varieties is but one department, governed by the same fundamental principles. The differences between the several forms of composition are those of species, rather than those of genera, giving rise to a varied adaptation of rules to something diverse, but not radically new, in methods or in ends.

We define rhetoric as the art which teaches the rules of composition. By composition we understand the expression in language of thoughts, emotions, for some definite end.

There are various arts and sciences subsidiary to rhetoric. Grammar gives us the rules by which the words of a language are united in a correct construction. Logic tests the validity of the arguments employed in address, and defines the form of sound judgments. Elocution guides in the delivery of discourse, and enhances the impression secured by rhetoric.

The philosophy of rhetoric is the reference of its rules to the principles of mental and moral science on which they are dependent. Mind expresses itself according to its own laws, toward its own ends. When affected from abroad, it is by the influence of mind — of those

for whom the composition is prepared. Whether composition is sought as a means of expression or of persuasion, its end is reached in mind, and mind gives the governing principles.

The first step toward rhetoric is, as in other arts, practical — the use of language in communicating thought. Not till some literature has arisen under the art, can the art itself separately arise. Composition must be the object of criticism and correction. Men will seek guidance and skill only in that about which they are employed. The necessity of rules will not be felt, nor will that be present from which they may, by experience and observation, be drawn, till literature has accumulated the material of criticism.

The second step toward rhetoric will be one of separation and classification, by which the several forms of language and parts of composition are distinguished, the one from the other; the figurative from the literal, the argumentative from the emotional. This analysis will give the terminology of the art, expressing the distinct features and forms of utterance which appear in the complex whole — composition.

Different methods and separable parts are now open to observation; their several effects become traceable; and

the results of composition, favorable or unfavorable, are referred to this and that manner of presentation. The mind thus takes the third step—the formation of rules which treasure up and make most available the knowledge derived from experience. At this point, rhetoric as an art appears. It states and combines the rules which literature in its progress has developed. The second and third steps alone strictly give an art; the first is merely conditional for them.

If rhetoric arises in the manner now pointed out, we see how erroneous is the idea that rules, when correctly applied, can hamper genius, or take away any just liberty. These rules are a concise general expression of the manner in which it has been found that past successes have been achieved. They have been arrived at by the study of the works of genius. Just rules are natural, not artificial. Nature, powerful nature, genius, achieves success through its own spontaneous apprehension of law. The method of this action—in the highest degree natural, since it is that of vigorous nature—now becomes a subject of inquiry, and is expressed in a precept. This precept, within its own limits, if rightly established, genius cannot henceforward reject, since therein is defined the

manner of its own efforts. Nor can Nature reject it, since she alone has established it. Rules exist latently in all the powerful, successful movements of mind. Genius shows itself to be genius by the certainty and celerity with which it reaches and acts upon great principles; by the precision and perfection with which it expresses the natural force that is in it.

Rules, precepts, arise from the desire to make our best efforts the guides of our future exertions; to render the path opened by genius accessible to industry; to shed the light of inspired men and inspired moments over ordinary men and ordinary moments. It is equally false to affirm the complete success and the complete failure of such efforts. Native power is indispensable; acquired power is indisputable. The law which the first has established, the second may adopt, and in its adoption develop rapidly and to the utmost its resources. A life which is not vigorous enough to force growth against obstacles, may yet be nourished into healthful activity. An intellect which cannot strike out the best method, can yet naturally and successfully pursue it. Experience is a teacher, and her precepts, when rightly apprehended and adopted, become a truer nature than the awkward, unkindly growth they displace.

It is a mistake to suppose that everything that has arisen without design is natural in any just use of the word, or that what arises from effort and discipline is artificial. The pugilist that strikes by a right rule, rightly applied, strikes most efficaciously, and most efficaciously because most naturally. This naturalness, perchance, does not spring from his own nature, but belongs to the best physical formation in the highest execution of its power. What is most perfect in any form of life or action is most natural, most nearly the fulness of natural law; that which is least perfect is least natural. All awkwardness, error, and imbecility are unnatural, however universal they may have become.

There are two things requisite for the success of rules that aim to give polished power to action. They must spring from nature; they must be incorporated into nature. While they must hit upon the natural, the right method, he who uses them must be so familiar with them, that his own native forces can find habitual, spontaneous expression under them. Art is, indeed, no substitute for force, thought, life; but it can develop native and acquired powers into a strength and symmetry of form not otherwise attainable. A true rule, springing from the most perfect expression of the most



perfect nature, must be incorporated into the mind, must become a part of it, unconsciously guiding its action; must be ingrafted upon it as a higher and better nature than its own.

All just disparagement of art has arisen from its becoming artificial; that is, from its separation as a dead form from the life which it was designed to express. No perfection of form that is vitalized by adequate energies can be amiss. Rhetoric shapes what science in all its departments has furnished. It cannot go beyond its material; it is enough if it make the most of this material. Art comes in for the guidance of power, and can do little till this, the condition of its action, is furnished. Fine art always implies a culture radical and broad, of which it is the expression, and in fault of this can be but the merest surface work.

This third step being taken, by which rhetoric is reached as a system of rules, there remains a fourth—the explanation of these rules through the principles on which they depend. This is properly the philosophy of rhetoric. Rules, especially those which govern the mind's action, are more easily and freely obeyed when their true force is seen. We shall strive, therefore, to ground our art in nature by referring all its precepts to

the principles which give them validity. We shall thus not only know what we are to do, but why we are to do it; have a reason rendered from nature as well as from experience; and enlarge and strengthen our practical results by our theoretical conclusions. We shall present the art in three parts — its ends, its means, its methods; thus answering the three questions, What do we pursue? By what means? In what manner?

# PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC.

---

## BOOK I.

### CHAPTER I.

#### DEPARTMENTS OF COMPOSITION.

No composition is aimless, not even soliloquy. If it were aimless, there could be no criticism, no excellence, no rules guiding its structure, since these imply that some end is to be reached, some right method to be employed. Composition, in all the forms in which it adds itself either to the labor or literature of the world, pursues some appreciable end, and thus lays itself open to criticism as right or wrong in its object, right or wrong in its method. So obvious is this, that we need not dwell upon it. Any composition absolutely without an end must be without connection, without meaning. There is some method even in madness.

The three leading ends of composition are defined by the three divisions of man's intellectual powers — under-

standing, emotions, and will. Truth to be adduced and established, or to be conveyed, feeling to be uttered, the purposes of men to be shaped, are each the objects of literary effort. Address, using the term broadly, may find its object in the understanding, in the emotions, or in the will. The philosophical essay does its chief work in the intellect. Its connections are logical, its conclusions those of the understanding. The poem springs from the heart, and acts upon the heart. Its excellency is tested by the character and scope of the emotions which it arouses. It has reached its end when men are moved to a just appreciation of its beauty and sentiment. The oration, when clothed in power, when possessed of its true generic character, moves men to action; is satisfied with no conclusions, is content with no feelings which do not issue in the desired effect. Oratory seeks to sweep through the whole man, to bind him to a purpose, and press him on in a career.

Language is so governed by the form of composition, and has so little reference to its intrinsic character, that any production is termed poetry which bears its external mark of metre. All productions destitute of this are hurriedly grouped as prose; while every composition which chances to be spoken is indifferently styled an oration. A more philosophical classification, if not a more convenient one, would distinguish prose, poetry,

and oratory according to their subject matter, whether addressed to the thoughts, emotions, or will of man. With these divisions, we have much under the poetical garb which is not poetry ; much spoken which does not belong to oratory ; much in a prose form which is impregnate with a true poetical fire. We do not insist on these divisions. They serve a profitable end in thought, if not always regarded in language.

There are three departments of composition in their typical forms strikingly distinct ; and though, as in almost all vital products, the shore-marks of division may neither be always straight nor well defined, the mind is greatly aided in its grasp of things by a recognition of those outstanding features, those prominent peaks from which the sloping sides, ultimately meeting on common ground, take their departure. Prose, the province of the understanding ; poetry, of passion ; oratory, of the whole man gathered and uttered in volition, — become, in view of the effort sought, the three great forms of composition, each possessed of fundamental characteristics.

The logical order of address, in its transition through the understanding, the emotions, and the will, is that in which they are here placed. Emotion is conditioned on apprehension, volition on emotion. We first see, then feel, and afterward act. The passions, aside from the

grosser appetites, are not accessible save through the intellect, nor the will save through the passions. In the passions, emotions, we here include the moral sentiments. There is no direct address to the sensibilities or to the will. I can exhort a man at once to think on the topic offered, but not, with propriety, to feel or will concerning it. Emotion and volition must depend for their character on the character and relations of the topic, and these must be presented as the indispensable condition of feeling and action. Presentation is first, is immediate, and this is to the intellect; emotion follows the presence of the appropriate object; and volition is subsequent to both.

A pure address to the understanding, however, is very different from one which passes like light through the lens of thought, only to be lodged with its warmth in the emotions. The one presents truth for its own sake; the other, for the feelings which it is fitted to arouse. In the one case, the topic and treatment are chosen in reference to the elucidation of truth; in the other, in reference to their power over the heart. For the one purpose, they are thoughtful; for the other, passionate and poetical.

A kindred diversity exists between those forms of address which terminate respectively in the passions and will. Some feelings leave the mind wrapped in emo-

tion — lost in the beauty, pathos, or grandeur of the accompanying conception. Others hurry it on to action ; the theme fills the mind with indignation or with desire, and thus drives it along the path of gratification. It is these different relations of emotions to the mind itself, and its active powers, which determine the result, and leave the theme, now lodged in the affections of the man, and now, as passing words of exhortation, lost in his life.

Though the logical relation of man's faculties is that now pointed out, their order in individual and historical development is somewhat different. The emotional nature is earlier aroused than the intellectual, and hence poetry, its natural expression, precedes prose. The passions, quickening and quickened by the imagination, incite physical effort, make life adventurous, anticipate the judgment, outstrip systematic thought, and, with no more of the intellectual element than is involved in the presentation of appropriate objects, inflame the mind with heroic verse.

The emotions, though, indeed, reached through the understanding, are roughly and strongly shaken before any clear light is shed through the mind, or any strong pleasure experienced in its more refined action. Many are ready to insist, that the passions in the outset move us only the more strongly from the murky intellectual

medium in which their subjects are presented, and the great predominance of sensible over intelligible objects. We would rather say, that in its early periods emotion is more rude and demonstrative, not more strong, than in its later periods.

Oratory, especially in its first forms, is more closely allied to the emotions than the thoughts, and hence has followed quickly upon poetry. It seeks also a practical end, — an immediate influence to be exerted on human action, — and has, therefore, an advantage over the more remote and abstract aims of thought.

A thorough and logical development of the intellect, a search after truth and satisfaction in it, are among the later steps of mental progress; yet these, once taken, react strongly on poetry and oratory, and impart to them a new character. While the movement of mind, though substantial, is yet crude and incomplete, it may tend to render both poetry and oratory somewhat formal and barren, to restrict them to its own didactic method; but when culture becomes deep, rich, and productive, its emotional products will be more profoundly passionate than those of any previous period; more just and symmetrical, they will also be thoroughly vital. Not till the mind has worked its way through the periods of scepticism and destruction into those of belief and construction, out from uncertainty and doubt into hearty



faith and advocacy, will the emotions claim and fulfil their highest part in the progress of man. The stream of human life does not run shallow as we advance. The most profoundly emotional truths committed to the mind, like morning stars, appear late above its horizon. In the fullest discipline of the human mind, therefore, we seem to return to the order first presented, in which a delicately, broadly, profoundly apprehensive intellect stands at the threshold of human faculties.

## CHAPTER II.

## PROSE.

PROSE, as distinguished both from poetry and oratory, arises in the service of the understanding; it is the storehouse of knowledge, of the processes and results of thought. It has the double office of establishing and imparting truth. In the one case, conviction is secured; in the other, information is imparted. The one process opposes itself to error, the other to ignorance. Argument is the means employed by the first, statement by the second.

These distinctions, often just, seem lost again in the fullest form of proof. Indisputable scientific propositions are stated in themselves, and in their proof, as things of knowledge, not of controversy. Argument differs from proof in implying unbelief to be combated, a proposition to be established against the tacit or avowed opposition of certain persons. Proof is arranged with sole reference to interior logical connections, while argument contemplates these in connection

with that phase of belief it would controvert, and the persons it would convince.

The chief connections of facts, as simple unexplained facts, are those of place and time. The rendering of them, under the first of these relations, is description; under the second, is narrative. History rests chiefly on the last. While prose describes and narrates principally for the facts themselves, it justly strives to render them in their real, their living force, though at this point the emotional elements of poetry indirectly enter.

The connections of things as grouped and explained by the mind are resemblance and cause and effect. These two are the scientific links of thought, and are chiefly employed in philosophical prose. Objects are treated according to their inherent and permanent agreements, or their causal dependence one on another; and these substantial connections of things become the formal connections of thought. Science and philosophy rest on these relations, and here prose is severely true to itself.

There is a connection, an involution of ideas, independent of things, by which the one contains or includes the other. This gives play to deduction, in each of its steps demonstrative. Interior, logical connections only are considered, and by these are successively unfolded the minor truths of some pregnant major premise. Thus

from a few simple notions are evolved the many propositions of geometry. Here, most of all, is prose nakedly true to the relations of thought.

The form of prose composition which is most anomalous, unless it be the degenerate prose drama, is the novel. The novel is in its aim poetical. It has chiefly to do with emotion, and especially with that of love. It presents life on the side of its affections and passions, and makes information and influence subordinate to this end. The moral aim or effect of the composition is involved in the narrative, not evolved from it, or enforced or illustrated by it. A segment of life, just or fanciful, is presented, and the reader is left to the natural effect of the principles of morality contained in it. The tale may show its prose character by relaxing into discussion and criticism, but these are aside from its proper office. The early romances were chiefly, almost exclusively, metrical, and the modern novel seems to be a prose poem — a transitional form between departments in their typical products quite distinct.

In prose the form of the expression is shaped exclusively by the exigencies of the thought, and admits of as much variety, and as many modifications, as this will suffer. In poetry and oratory, impression being pre-eminent, a variety of things may enter into the product, may concur with and enhance its impression on the emo-

tions. In prose, the mind alone being addressed, any adjunct of metre, anything granted to the form merely, serves to distract the attention and weaken the thought. A measured flow of syllables thus becomes in prose a blemish. The harmony of alliteration, when employed, must indicate a kindred harmony of ideas, and arise as an undesigned coincidence. An antithesis of words is only justified by the antithesis of the thought. The emotions are influenced by harmony, by concurrence of impressions. The intellect seeks distinction, division, single and explicit statement. Therefore thought, as thought, accepts no method which to it would be either constraint or distraction. The rule softens as the aim of prose becomes more inclusive, adding pleasure to instruction.

## CHAPTER III.

## POETRY.

CONTRARY to the usual method, we shall treat rhetoric as inclusive of all forms of composition; since no one form can be understood without apprehending its relations to the remaining forms; since each mode rests on essentially the same principles, and employs the same means, modified by the particular end proposed; since the three departments of expression are complementary divisions under one general movement, the communication of mind to mind through language.

Poetry arises from the interchange of emotion, emotion expressed for its own sake, with no ulterior reference to action. Feeling is aroused and nourished in man by the things and movements about him. Beauty, objects of hope and apprehension, of affection and aversion, reward and retribution, stir powerfully the human soul, and force its emotions into language. The mind is first and chiefly moved through sensible objects, and under their forms continues to present its feelings. The imagery of the imagination gathers in its procession

things sublime and terrible, beautiful and joyful, homely and mirthful, and the heart is by turns awed with a solemn pageant, saddened with a dark retinue, cheered with a sportive troop, or made merry with a mock carnival.

The emotions, ever varying in character and depth, are prone to utterance, to seek the sympathy, the realization, and extension of language, and hence have given rise to this most adequate and full medium of expression — poetry. Poetry, in its perfect type, its strictly characteristic form, is emotional conception expressed in metrical language. The substance and life of poetry is feeling; its peculiar and appropriate form is rhythm. The latter affords the more convenient, but not the more important distinction. Poetry properly demands them both.

There is no limit but that of the emotions to the subject matter of poetry, and no restrictions on its metrical forms but the possibilities of language. The more extended and weighty the feeling, the less it will cumber itself with the demands of form. This is seen in the themes appropriate to blank verse, and in the constant tendency of humor and satire to rhyme. The more brief and isolated the emotion, the more intricate and carefully wrought out the measure. The stones of which a temple is reared are individually treated slightly.

The stone of which a brooch is made is wrought into some rare and exquisite form. An intricate and perfect rhythm, if long continued, wearies more than plainer verse. There is a fitness between emotion and metrical language which makes the latter the almost necessary vehicle of the former. To repeat a song is not to render it; to state an emotion, or speak of its object, is not to express it. The passions of men have always sought, as their most copious utterance, song, — poetry united to music, — and will not readily part, on any plea, with the remnant of this association — metre. Music and metre are as much the elocution of poetry as emphasis and gesture of oratory. As emotion is the great modulator of the voice, by inversion sound becomes a chief medium of emotion; and passionate composition — poetry — looks to it for aid. Feeling is often contained more in the tone than in the word, and can never divorce itself from this, its most natural expression, nor stand in the same undefined relation to it as prose. Poetry searches for all the avenues of emotion, arouses the senses, and in its flow of sounds soothes, saddens, or quickens the soul. This vocal form is the natural outgrowth of feeling.

Poetry receives character and value from the nature of the emotions which gave rise to it, and which it is fitted to impart. The more common divisions of poetry



have little reference one to another, and rest their distinctions now on subject matter, now on form. Epic and drama, ode and sonnet, furnish convenient designations for ordinary speech, but do not spring from any systematic apprehension of the subjects of poetry; nor do they, save in single features, define its field. We need to see the cardinal divisions of the emotions, that we may therein find the offices and relations of poetry. The most profound impulses, as well as the most simple and sensible pleasures of the soul, are realized in verse. The oration is a weapon carefully shaped for an immediate and explicit purpose; the poem is a germ containing within itself, and for itself, the full-balanced forces of one form of emotional life — a life with which dissemination is an interior necessity. Poetry, occupied with conceptions which arise under feeling, and are by it perfected into beauty, becomes a fine art, and belongs, by generic features to rhetoric, by individual characteristics to esthetics.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ORATORY.

ORATORY differs from the forms of composition already mentioned in its end, and consequently in its relations and means. Oratory proposes an immediate effect — in some way to guide or govern action. As that mental state which results in action is completed in volition, oratory aims to affect the will. Thought is not elaborated for its own sake, nor emotion aroused for itself, but only to be immediately employed in persuasion — in deciding the state of the will.

The means and method appropriate are determined by this practical end of immediate influence, and all that is merely philosophical or poetical, occupying without constraining the mind, becomes inefficacious and wrong. Thoughts and emotions are considered only in their bearings on the proposed action, and are made, with light and heat, to converge at this point as a perfect focus. The mind must be convinced, but convinced of the value and practicability of the action proposed; the heart must be aroused, but aroused to the motives of

duty, profit, and pleasure which press upon it. By true oratory the whole soul is thrown into a single current, setting outward toward effort, — this effort becoming more protracted and thorough in proportion to the deep and inclusive character of the desired end. The highest oratory can only be called forth when the energies of the whole nature, with its fundamental forces, moral and religious, are to be aroused, and to be determined in the permanent direction of holy living.

As a further result of this outward end, oratory is thrown into relations wholly diverse from those of poetry and philosophy. The philosopher, the poet, are abstracted, the one by his thought, the other by his conception, from all other objects. Everything aside from the one thing in hand is foreign, is alien, to the idea, and to the mind occupied with it. The thought is governed by its own logical relations, the emotion arises with its own sympathetic connections, and therefore the work of composition proceeds by separation—by rendering an individual thing in its individual way. The success of the labor is dependent on this interior development of the thing treated. The orator, on the other hand, considers not more the intrinsic power of the theme than its relations to those whose action he purposes to influence by it. The last is with him the controlling consideration. The truth, like iron, must be

shaped into an instrument wherewith to accomplish most perfectly and quickly a given work. It is with him as with the agriculturist, whose task is assigned under given conditions of soil and climate; not to subject all his efforts to these is immediate and utter failure. The oration grows up under a vital power not less than the poem; but in the last we mark the native force and fulness of a life freely developed, like a plant in an open and rich field; in the first we note how this and that favoring and unfavoring circumstance have modified the tree, pushing its way with persistent power among its fellows, and gathering nutriment, sunlight, and air as it was able. The oration is the complex product of exterior and interior force, not the peaceful product of the last only. That which here rules the form, which defines and explains it, is the exigency of the circumstances under which it has arisen. A given audience, through whom a given end is to be reached, is the ever-present and controlling thought of the orator. He may not withdraw into speculation, or at the beck of imagination turn aside to the retreats of beauty. He has no privacy, but is ever haunted by that sea of faces, whose surface is the condensed utterance of many human hearts. His is no single conflict; a host is to be met, and with no other weapon than that of his theme: in the same instant and by the same action, he is to

reach and vanquish each individual, trenched as he may be in dulness and inanity, trenched as he may be in prejudice and passion. The relations, therefore, of the orator to the audience and the theme become vital considerations.

A poem is the metrical utterance of emotion ; philosophical prose, a logical statement of thought ; while oratory is just and impassioned persuasion, the legitimate influencing of the will through both the understanding and the feelings. If either of these elements is wanting, if the passion is irrational, or the reason unimpassioned, there is no eloquence.

The leading divisions of oratory arise from diversity of ends. The orator seeks to secure action under certain principles of human conduct. He does not originate impulses, but shows the relation of lines of effort to the native impulses of the mind. The person persuaded is impelled by his own desires, the speaker presenting the object and opening up the way through which these are to be gratified. The oration will receive its character from the character of the constitutional force of which it avails itself in securing effort, from the idea to which it addresses and unites its argument.

The chief original impulses which supply the impelling power in human action, are right, interest, and pleasure. The first of these is wholly peculiar ; the last

two are more closely related. The sense of right is in all men simple and original, and enters into the competition of motives with its own native force. With self-affirmed and incontrovertible authority, it claims to restrain, quicken, and guide all action. It is, in the order of man's constitution, the only independent, always just, always present impulse, and therefore it alone can rightly order the whole field of action, and give that vigor and that proportion of parts which are just.

The emotions which directly sustain and enforce the right are an antecedent sense of obligation, and, subsequent to the action, the feelings of approval, or of guilt, of shame and remorse. Indirectly, the affections also strengthen the right, as they themselves are nourished by it. These are disinterested, and only arise in full force in connection with virtue. Once present, they strongly animate the mind, and render its obedience spontaneous and cheerful. They enforce virtue by the enjoyments which they bring. They are reverence, love, benevolence, pity, gratitude, indignation, scorn, according to the character and condition of the person drawing them forth. The word "love" has come to cover a great variety of feelings, but more specifically applies to moral affection. Any or all these feelings may be called forth as the grounds of moral action.

Pleasure and interest present motives of action of

another class, legitimate or illegitimate, according as they are retained within or transcend the limits assigned them by morality. Ultimately both of these rest on the appetites and passions for impulse. Our appetites are most immediate inlets of pleasure, and hence, in the anticipation and provision which they require, most obvious incentives to action. Nor are they exclusively those of the body. The love of truth and of beauty are essentially of this nature.

These tastes of the mind, like appetites, furnish a direct motive to action. The passions are distinguished from the affections in having perpetual reference to self; in finding at this point the spring of feeling; and in the sudden and complete control which they often attain. Though social, they are, as far as the good of others is concerned, either indifferent or malevolent. Of the first class are vanity, pride, contempt. Vanity and pride, from their religious use, convey almost exclusively censure, and are applied only to the stronger feelings of their class, while self-love and self-respect mark the milder exercise of the same emotions. We use the one term to cover all degrees of satisfaction in view of the admiration to be elicited by one's possessions or accomplishments; the other, all degrees of esteem in which one holds himself. So used, it is obvious they mark very powerful and persuasive feelings, furnishing con-

•

stant motives to action. Indeed, vanity and pride lie at the very root of interested effort. The malevolent passions, arising from some disturbance of self by another, are anger, hatred, envy, jealousy. To urge any action by its immediate relation to appetite or passion, is to appeal to pleasure.

More frequently, however, the gratification is remote. Means to be secured by labor intervene, and toward them the effect is directed. These means call forth desire—a feeling differing in the object toward which it is directed, but in its nature the same. The mind is not indifferent to the things which afford gratification, but is thrown by them, one and all, into a state of desire. These means to ulterior pleasure which call forth the desires are wealth, power, position, and knowledge. There are other things whose presence is a condition of our enjoyment, as life and society, and are, therefore, said to be objects of desire. They, however, stand in a different relation to desire from the four former. These are the constant objects of effort, the immediate and pervasive motives of action. An action springing from any one of them is said to be interested, since it seeks means which may afford pleasure. These desires sometimes become so intense, so overlook the end in view, as to be termed passions. Of this nature is avarice. There are also passions



directly aroused by the relations of objects to desire, as joy, sorrow, hope, fear, disappointment, regret. Motives drawn from the desires, or the passions immediately dependent on them, are those of interest; and from one of the three sources of action, right, pleasure, and interest, all motives must be taken. The higher may include the lower motive, or the lower may strengthen the higher, or there may be a present conflict between them.

The highest form of eloquence is evidently that which most thoroughly and deeply searches the human heart for motives resulting in the broadest and most valuable action. So judged, that oratory which acts on the moral impulses, and seeks to change character, is preëminent. Here the end is most inclusive—the transformation of the whole man, the government of all action by the pervasive law of right. No purpose can be more profound than this. The impulses to which the orator trusts are those of conscience and the affections, the holiest portions of our nature. In the greatness of the work and the weight of the motives, no persuasion can surpass that which enforces virtue. As the moral affections are chiefly aroused by religion, as virtue has only been persistently and successfully enforced in connection with the Christian religion, this kind of oratory has been termed that of the pulpit.

The moral nature, in the duties which it imposes in our relations to God, gives rise to religion, and virtue becomes holiness. The moral law cannot fail, if rightly apprehended, to extend itself to, and enforce, religion; and the facts of religion, in turn, cannot fail to throw about all moral duties new sanctions, and to evolve minor obligations in their natural dependence from the chief obligation — that of man to God. Revelation enlarges the sphere of conscience, not by arbitrary commands, but by bringing to light new and fundamental facts, in themselves inclusive of old duties, and imposing fresh ones. Religion of necessity thus involves and includes the highest morality; because its peculiar injunctions are, in their consequences, more weighty than any other; because the minor duties of man to man it enforces from a new and higher stand-point, a broader apprehension of the relations from which they spring, and the results to which they lead; and because in its own promises and threatenings, and the power with which it arouses the affections, it adopts and reinvigorates the moral law. There thus arises sacred eloquence, — the eloquence of a Christian pulpit, — immeasurably superior in the motives and emotions with which it urges the mind and heart. The immediate consequences of virtue and vice are lost in their more permanent results; the breadth of eternity is given to

action; the grace of God stoops to bless man to his utmost capacity; the justice of God walls in and pursues his transgressions. In weight, terror, sublimity, joy, and hope, no motives can for an instant compare with those which in sacred eloquence inspire and overpower the mind. Virtue is caught up and inwrapped with the ineffable glory of God; the virtuous man is caught up and inwrapped in the glory of an incarnate Christ.

Armed as is this oratory with weapons of celestial temper, it has utmost occasion for them all. If sacred oratory is great in its theme, great also are the difficulties which it has to overcome. It opposes itself not to isolated actions, but to the very current of conduct. It proposes to reach the whole life, and shape it from its very centre; to re-beget the man into truth and love. Indifference strengthening into aversion is to be met; the ear is to be won; the intellect to be convinced; the heart to be convicted; and the religious nature so aroused and inspired, that it can cast down and rule the long dominant impulses of the soul. Yet the chief obstacle to success is in the mind of the orator himself. He is ever liable to lose conviction, to share the spirit which he is to correct, and to try with unsubstantial and inoperative ideas to exorcise the spirit of unbelief. There is no oratory whose whole power depends so much on its inspiration as this, since it seeks to issue

in vitalizing truth. God must breathe into its nostrils the breath of life, that it may become a living soul.

How wholly sacred oratory is the offspring of the Christian religion is seen in the fact, that the demonstrative oration of the ancients, which most nearly corresponds to it, is ever liable to sink out of the department of eloquence by lacking an immediate practical end. A eulogy, a presentation of character, is not strictly oratory, save as it oversteps the limits of praise, and holds up for instruction the conduct presented; save as it condenses into motive the narrative of an illustrious life, and presses the hearer from idle admiration to active emulation. The difficulty with which it reaches a practical end, and the facility with which, in the symmetry of an artistic labor, it loses itself, separate this form of oratory very far from sacred eloquence. It belongs rather to those transitional, doubtful products, which, indeed, retain oral delivery, but lack the essential feature of strict address — its hold on action.

The interests and pleasures of men furnish the department of secular eloquence. These, as motives of action, are intimately related, the difference between them being chiefly one of time. What contributes to our present interest or advantage is expected to contribute to our future pleasure. It is an anticipated enjoyment which imparts present value to objects whose possession is coveted.

Address contemplates an audience, an assembly of individuals, to be influenced by common considerations. This address may aim at individual action or at joint action; at the action of man as man under his individual responsibilities, or at those joint measures by which communities and associations determine and regulate their conduct. In the first case, oratory will be almost wholly of a moral or sacred character, and belong to the type already spoken of; in the second case, it will be chiefly of a secular character, the expediency and wisdom of a proposed measure being the object of discussion. It is only the moral and religious impulses, which, fundamentally the same in all, need to be aroused and directed by oratory — to be called forth for the government of the life. Individual pleasure and interest are so diverse in the lines of conduct which they secure, as to allow little except instruction furnishing general principles for their guidance; are so prompt and excessive in their action, as to require little aside from the restraint and government of the moral nature. Virtue, therefore, in its individual forms, as temperance, — in its collective and most authoritative forms, as religion, — becomes the controlling, the well nigh exclusive motive of all oratory, which seeks to influence man in his strictly personal life. This form of address, having to do with that which is sacred in man, — with virtue, —

partakes, in all its branches, of the character, and is subject to the laws, of its fullest type — pulpit oratory.

While the interests and pleasure of the individual fall out of oratory, and become questions of private pursuit, those interests which are reached or protected by the joint action of men afford points of grave deliberation. The law of right still remains as a governing principle, by which all action should be restrained ; but the question is constantly arising, What, within the limits assigned by moral law, do the interests of the community demand? What, within the constitutional law of man's nature, should become civil law? This question is propounded again and again in each organic assembly, from the highest legislative body to the lowest, and in each it is to be answered on principles of general advantage. It is points of common interest, and not of individual morality, which are committed to legislation, and it is in its relations to the first that the second is discussed. In the pulpit, on the other hand, the first is treated in its bearings on the second. Here secular distinguishes itself broadly from sacred eloquence. It has to do with the life, the action, of the community, as opposed to the life, the action, of the individual. This is strictly private, of no moment, save as, leaving its province, it directly affects that which is public — the safety and temporal well-being

of others, the well-being of government. Sacred eloquence, on the other hand, penetrates at once the privacy of the individual heart, and laboring here, only shows itself indirectly, though most efficiently, in questions of social and political concernment. The highest legislative body works within man's original native rights; the lowest, within these, and also within those further regulations established and defined by superior civil law. Allied to these are the questions which occupy every deliberative body, from the most permanent corporate association to the most transient popular meeting. Even a religious body, as a body, is occupied with questions of prudence and wisdom—of the judicious choice of means.

Deliberative eloquence is one of the long-recognized departments of oratory. As contrasted with pulpit oratory, its advantages are found in the singleness and explicitness of the action proposed, and the spontaneous interest which it usually calls forth; its inferiority in the relatively narrow, though weighty, motives with which it presses the heart.

What faith and love are to sacred oratory, liberty, public weal, and patriotism are to secular oratory. Much will be left to the deliberation of men in a free government, little in a tyrannical. Oratory will become a most coveted and just instrument of influence in legis-

lative and popular assemblies, when these are themselves the source of power. Freedom gives play to action, and action may then be controlled by the just, the natural law of persuasion. The mass-meeting, the hall, and the senate chamber have not existed without a vast influence on oratory in our own country.

A subsidiary, and, in the form in which it now exists, a most peculiar, type of eloquence is that of the bar. Law established is yet to be applied. To determine what is law, and what are the facts on which it is to be administered, requires much investigation and discrimination. This, in a trial had before a limited bench of learned judges, resolves itself into an almost exclusively logical process, and, losing the emotional element, ceases to be oratory. Occasionally, however, the judge, in setting aside or establishing precedents, is for the time being a legislator; broad and weighty motives of general interest may be urged upon the mind, and the plea become a most thoughtful, yet impassioned, product.

In the trial by jury, more of the popular element is preserved; and though the question is here strictly one of facts, of proof, and therefore somewhat severe and barren, the orator easily steals away from the legal evidence and character of the act to its social effects and dramatic bearings. The plea thus often becomes more emotional than it of right ought to be, and the moral



law of oratory, which regulates the just influence of mind over mind, is in a measure set aside. The judge and jury being by oath and by common integrity bound to the line of legal, of just action, there is given to evidence and argument, in judicial oratory, a preponderance which does not belong to them in the symmetrical oration. Persuasion is in many forms positively impertinent, since it implies a want of integrity in those to whom it is addressed.

To escape as far as may be the dulness of demonstration, and yet, on the one hand, not fall into the impropriety of a popular harangue, nor, on the other, employ surreptitious motives, becomes the difficult task of the advocate. Ancient judicial eloquence was quite different from modern, through the unsettled laws, and the number and popular character of the judges; it was appropriately, therefore, a more impassioned appeal.

The chief divisions of oratory, according as individual or collective action is aimed at, are sacred and secular. The chief form of secular oratory is deliberative. In modern society, in the application of law, occasion is given for a second and restricted form — that of judicial oratory. There is a large and increasing class of lectures, addresses, orations, which may not seem readily to fall into any of the above divisions. Many of these so lack the force and form of address, or are so strictly

didactic, as not to belong to oratory. A large number aim to affect the moral state of the individual, to inspire philanthropy, patriotism, a love of excellence, or a regard for truth. These derive their incentives from the moral nature, and direct themselves to it, and hence belong to the class of sacred oratory. Many preach besides those who profess to. A smaller class of casual speeches, proposing some social or associate action, belong to the class of deliberative orations.

## BOOK II.

---

THE means of composition which we now proceed to discuss are of two kinds—the very material, the thought, the feeling, which the mind furnishes, and the language, which gives shape to it. These two stand to each other in the relation of substance and form, and we must know the nature of the one, and the laws which govern the other, before we can advantageously employ them. Few will hesitate to speak of language as a means, something to be employed in composition, and therefore to be studied in its rhetorical laws and relations, while a knowledge of its construction and grammatical principles is presupposed. It will not, however, seem so plain that the subject matter of composition, the argument and emotion employed, should be regarded as means. This use of language is applicable to oratory, rather than to poetry or philosophy.

The oration, having in view an immediate external

end, must select from its resources that which shall be to it the means of present success. The essay, the poem, on the other hand, aiming to present what is already contained in the mind and the emotions, have occasion for a right method, but not for a choice of means, since the truths, the conception to be presented, are both end and means. In philosophy, argument is not the instrument of an advocate, wielded for a purpose, opening a way toward an ulterior object, but is the unfolding of inherent connections and intrinsic relations, by which we come to see things as they are. Vision is here aimed at, and the eye is directed along the line of exposition and argument as the vista of truth. Truth is only known when known in itself and in its premises: the premises are more a portion of it than a means to it. It is not belief, but the grounds of belief, that philosophy inculcates. The ends and means, therefore, are the same; and while it requires perspicuity of presentation, the thought in hand furnishes the limit and substance of its labor. The same is true of poetry. Its emotions are not means, but ends; not necessities, but indulgences; not the straight lines of effort, but the eddying circuits of pleasure.

Our first inquiries, therefore, must have chief reference to oratory, since this alone aims directly at influence, and needs alone to seek directly its means.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE LAW OF INFLUENCE.

WHILE man has an individual life, complete in itself, the development and fulness of that life are most strictly dependent on his social connections. The bud of the vine has latent within it the entire power of its species; yet no bud blossoms or bears the clustering grapes, except as it is one of a community of buds, receiving nourishment from a common stock. The mature fruit of the tree is not reached by divided, but by compounded life. It is borne aloft on trunk and branches, the growth of years, and nourished by the associated life of which it is but a feeble portion. Thus is it with man. Man alone is a savage: one in the community of the family of the state, and of civilized nations, he becomes civilized, and completes the circle of his comforts with the products of all climates, and the labors of all men. Individual life is a bud far up, and far out, on the common stock. It is sustained by the knowledge, the strength, of those who have gone before it, and nourished by the activity of those about it.

This is equally true of it in its physical and intellectual dependences.

The influence of man over man is not only admissible, it is inevitable; not only inevitable, but the condition and law of his progress. Among the various forms of influence which men exert one upon another, none is more legitimate, more respects the integrity and freedom of individual action, than persuasion. The limit, the law of persuasion, defining its end and means, is that of right. Not that action, as virtuous, is the only end to be proposed by the orator; but his aims and methods are ever to be enclosed within those of virtue, lying in the same direction with them, always receiving their sanction, often enforced by their obligations.

It is only by accepting the law of virtue as the line and limit of influence, that the orator respects his own nature. Right is, or should be, the rule of his intellectual and social life. Not till he can invalidate a claim enforced in his own conscience, and annul the grand distinction and justification of conduct, may he set it aside in the most delicate and widely influential of his acts.

The claims of the intellectual and moral nature of the persons persuaded against virtue are also disregarded. To reach an illegitimate end, the orator must avail himself of ignorance, resort to misrepresentation,

excite or cherish excessive or unworthy emotion. To withhold truth and arouse evil passions is a wrong done to the parties affected by such action ; much more is it a wrong when these means are used to induce action, and make the persons persuaded partners in evil. Oratory, relying on the spontaneous, free movement of the mind, referring all its motives to its approval and adoption, cannot neglect the great laws of thought, truth, and right.

If, however, we take the low ground that success gives law to every department of effort, and that oratory, as an art, only asks what can be done by the orator with ultimate advantage to himself, we still reach the same conclusion. Right is the law of broad and permanent success in influence.

The orator must lose hold upon truth, when he ceases to present it, to make it the staple of his own thinking and acting. If he deserts the right at one time, he cannot return to it with deep conviction at another. It becomes to him like his other methods — a device and a trick, requiring only skill to be well played off. Whatever may be said of rhetoric, the man himself, the orator, cannot prosper intellectually and emotionally on such a method. The depth, sincerity, and vigor of his nature are lost. All the distinctions which judgment and conscience make are in practice thrown away, and

the mind, employed as an instrument of cunning expedients, first grows weary of, and then despises, all genuine, thorough work. There can be no moral affection, no enthusiasm for truth; for the heart is either never called forth, or shortly betrayed. The power of will is lost, as it systematically yields to circumstances, nothing being proposed save temporary success.

The whole man, therefore, being weakened and wasted by such a method, what shall become of the orator? Scepticism, suspicion, and insincerity, however crafty they may be, cannot compass any weighty moral ends. The powers of a world of conviction, faith, and honesty have become a mockery to them, and therefore forever elude them. Virtue is the law of intellectual, emotional, and voluntary life in the orator, and, therefore, the law of oratory. To think the contrary is to suppose that falsehood is as productive as truth, and that a mind which betrays itself in all its best impulses shall yet lose none of its strength.

If we look at the persons addressed, we shall also see that virtue assigns the law of successful persuasion. The orator who avails himself of the ignorance and passions of men incurs the risk, that, in wiser and calmer moments, the fact may be discerned, and prove henceforth the occasion of distrust and separation. The grounds of influence in oratory are confidence and sym-



pathy. Without these, the mind holds itself aloof, and the emotions sought for are not aroused. Nothing more excites men of ordinary intelligence to resistance, to close all the avenues of the heart, than the discovery that they have been deceived and designedly misled. The reserve with which men listen to a plea at the bar or the harangue of a politician, the suspicion and caution with which they follow its arguments, illustrate the loss of confidence with which those persons are received whose aims are divided between interest and truth. The orator, to secure confidence,—the great condition of influence,—must either, therefore, be virtuous, or perfectly simulate virtue, or rely on an ignorance and rudeness too great even to discover or heed the fundamental character of the measures and means employed. It is evident that but one of these ways can be certainly and constantly successful. The greater the intelligence and virtue of those addressed, the broader and more important the field of oratory, the more does right become the inviolable law of influence. Whatever may be thought of ignorant and vicious men, wise and virtuous men will not long yield themselves to the mischievous management of a monger of lies.

The notion of oratory which regards it as open to all expedients and forms of trickery, is radically false. True words, words powerful to convince and persuade,

are not mere words, are not hollow, but full, swelling with the life and character of the man who utters them. Only so far as speech embodies emotion and becomes genuine in the mouth of him whose it is, can it arouse and inspire men. Fire cannot be kindled without fire. The mind of the orator is the point of greatest heat: here all becomes molten, concurrent, ready to issue into the world of action. It is his character which gives character to the words of a great orator. They are quick with his life. They are thrown forth by his assertion, they penetrate by his power. One cannot steal the mail, neither can he steal the eloquence, of a nobler man. Words measure, and are measured by, the mind's dimensions, and, repeated without the power which first uttered them, are well nigh lost. It is impossible to swell out the contour of a great oration without a corresponding life, since the one can only be by, and because of, the other. Greatness is not born of nothing, and least of all in the department of moral influence. We must not be suffered to forget the famous words of the great orator, —

“True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the sub-

ject, and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire to it; they cannot reach it. It comes, if it come at all, like the outbreking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments and studied contrivances of speech, shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country, hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent; then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, outrunning the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object, — this, this is eloquence; or rather it is something greater and higher than all eloquence; it is action, noble, sublime, godlike action.”

Eloquence must then rely on moral force, since this is the force of character, and there is no strong rational life that is not locked together by a moral purpose. The chief ends of oratory are directly moral; the

included ends of prosperity and social well-being are so indirectly. In advocating these, there is ever an ulterior reference to the moral conditions of society — a subservience of immediate to remote good, of individual to general good, which subjects the labor and views of the orator to virtue.

Success in just ends, through and within moral interests, is the law of influence in oratory. If we cannot enumerate robbery among the methods of production or of exchange, much more can we not admit deception among the means of influence. The former is not more totally destructive of the conditions of commercial success than the latter of the ends of speech.

## CHAPTER II.

## ARGUMENTS.

FACTS, truths, are the only safe basis and guide of action. Our action, to be successful, must unite itself to things as they are, and lie in the line of the forces which govern the world. Without this, all effort is futile, all issues are false. The first necessity of rational action, therefore, is truth; a presentation of the facts on which effort is to be grafted, and of the principles by which it is to be governed. As an accurate and correct statement of facts and principles is not readily arrived at, as many motives exist which may induce others to mislead us, presentation must assume, more or less, the form of proof, according to the difficulty and doubt involved. If we have confidence in the knowledge and good intention of the person bringing forward the facts, we require no proof beyond the testimony of a simple statement. More frequently, however, suspicious of the many unconscious errors of opinion; of the warping effect of feeling, habit, and interest; of the zeal of the advocate, the partisan attachments of the orator,

or the limited relations of the preacher, — we require an independent basis of rational belief to be furnished to our own minds.

Presentation thus becomes argument, proof, supporting a proposition, establishing a fact, or sweeping away an error. The sources and kinds of proof, and their relations to conviction, become, therefore, important subsidiary inquiries to the strictly rhetorical work—the best choice, arrangement, and statement of arguments for their effect on the mind.

The sources of proof are two — intuition and experience. The word "intuition" is taken from the action of one of our senses, but is capable of an easy extension to all those faculties of internal or external perception which directly or independently report anything to the mind.

First among the intuitive powers of the mind are the senses. These present distinct and peculiar phenomena, and are our most adequate authority for them. We can have no better proof for a fact than that we ourselves have seen or heard it. This testimony of the senses is independent and authoritative, and can only be modified by the conclusions of an experience which has proceeded on the ground of its general validity. When and how far the eye and the ear are to be trusted, we can only decide by testimony which they themselves give

us. Within these limits, their proof is as perfect as any proof can be.

A second form of intuitive knowledge is that direct apprehension which the mind has of its own action. It is more usually termed the testimony of consciousness. It does not arise from any one faculty, but from the very nature of mind. Thought that it may be thought, must be known to itself; feeling that it may be feeling, must be aware of itself; mind that it may be mind, must be conscious of its own phenomena. Complete sleep or unconsciousness would involve the perfect suspension of intellectual life. Consciousness testifies directly to mental phenomena — to their existence and character, not to their correctness or the truth of their results.

A third source of intuitive knowledge is memory — the testimony which the mind gives to facts which have occurred in its past experience. This, of all the forms of direct proof, is the most uncertain, is subject to the most limitations and corrections from experience. These restrictions, however carefully established, do not give to memory its authority: this is independent and original; experience only defining the bounds within which it can be relied on. Though a man should see but six feet, it is, nevertheless, sight which carries knowledge thus far. Memory is verified by memory,

and the experience which corrects it depends upon it. A certain picture which memory has given I may afterward be able to confront with the facts themselves derived from an independent source, as testimony or vision; yet even in this most favorable case of testing her power, I still trust the distinctness and precision of her statement for one member of the comparison. The validity of memory is more easily judged than that of most of our intuitive powers; and the fact that in so many cases it seems so signally to fail, may appear to cast some suspicion on our other intuitive faculties. As nothing can be more destructive to faith in human knowledge than a want of trust in the original and unverified action of the mind, it is important to see that the uncertain action of memory does not imply similar uncertainty in the testimony of kindred faculties.

The chief fault of memory is negative — that it does not retain the matter intrusted to it; but this does not invalidate its own positive testimony, much less the positive testimony of other powers.

Again, the results of memory are readily confounded with those of other faculties — of imagination, of reasoning. The partial premises which memory has actually given we complete from our fancy, or by the conclusions of the judgment. The whole is then stored in the mind, and afterward reported by memory, and on the



authority of memory; a portion — that furnished by imagination or inference — is found false. Here the falsification of memory is apparent, not real. There has not been a just separation of the mind's action; and if this separation should have taken place by memory, her failure to make it is a defective assertion rather than a false assertion. Much which seems to be erroneous is simply defective. That we are compelled to define closely and carefully the safe limits of memory, we are ready to admit, and are quite willing to carry the assertion over with its whole force to the other intuitive faculties; but that within these limits they are not each and all perfectly reliable, cannot be admitted. That these limitations should be numerous in the case of memory is not surprising, since we have here so many concurrent sources of certainty.

A fourth and most important intuitive faculty is that of the reason. By the term we designate the power which gives us the regulative ideas of knowledge. Things are known only as they are known in certain relations — in their arrangement in space, in their order in time, in the connection of cause and effect. The regulative ideas of space, time, cause, by which we arrange impressions into knowledge, are given us directly by the mind, are perceived at once by the reason in the appropriate phenomena. These regulative ideas

are those of existence, resemblance, space, number, time, cause, consciousness, beauty, right, freedom, the infinite. Under some of these, as that of space, are included many subordinate intuitions — the axioms of geometry. These the mind apprehends without proof.

The chief fallacies of this form of proof are mistaking the results of reflection or association for those of intuition, or overlooking the conditions of the safe action of our intuitive faculties. The mind interested in its own movement, in the parade of argument, gives more attention to ratiocative than to intuitive proof. As, however, the latter is the foundation of the former, it must evidently furnish us just premises, before the simply logical, deductive process can be safely instituted. The more rigid this movement of mind, the more certainly does it elaborate error, unless it first freely accepts as premises all the data furnished by intuition.

The second source of proof is experience. Experience acts only on the facts furnished by the intuitions. The phenomena presented are dwelt upon by the mind, till their resemblances and connections are seen and stated in general terms. Each object is to the eye individual; and named, the name is a proper noun. When, however, other objects are seen closely to resemble it, and this fact is marked by the application to them of the same name, the word becomes a common

noun, and contains a first truth of experience. The mind thus proceeds through the innumerable objects of the external and the internal world, and groups them in classes according to permanent resemblances, constantly transforming its proper into common nouns, and greatly multiplying the latter. Each name of a class contains a fact of experience, and language becomes the storehouse of knowledge. Scientific knowledge differs from popular speech only in the more fundamental and connected character of the resemblances on which it proceeds. A term of scientific classification is part of a system designating not merely one kind of agreement, but constituting the complement of other terms by which the interconnections of an entire department are noted. A first product of experience is the application to agreeing things of common nouns; a more mature product, their scientific classification.

Things agree not only in appearances, but also in their action one upon another. To mark this agreement, and thus learn the laws of cause and effect by which things are united in events, and move on in an ever-changing universe, becomes a second most important and more difficult labor of experience. This effort, in its incipient and rude form, at once shows itself in language, and verbs expressing some given action mark by their application the character of the event.

Here, again, the chief difference between the popular and the scientific terms in which these truths of experience are treasured, lies in the more accurate, well-defined agreements on which the latter rest. An apple falls to the earth, and gravitates to the earth. The one word marks the fact, the other the fact in its precise manner or law. Man, as he becomes increasingly thoughtful, notes more and more the character of the forces at work about him, and thus reaches the exact truths of experience.

Experience proceeds on the permanent character of nature — that things remain in properties what they are, and, as involved therein, that forces everywhere adhere to their fixed law of action. From agreement, therefore, in appearances and properties, it infers sameness of nature, and attributes to the same species an identity of inherent powers. On the other hand, from agreement of causes, of governing circumstances, it anticipates a similarity of effects. Experience ever argues from resemblance — from similar effects to identity of causes, from identity of causes to similarity of effects.

But resemblance has many degrees. It passes from perfect identity through sameness, resemblance, and analogy into the most transient and accidental agreements. From this fact, great uncertainty attaches to many of the conclusions of experience, and the substan-

tial and safe features of likeness in every department must be learned by discriminating and protracted experience within that department. Not till observation itself has taught us can we tell how much stress to lay on the agreement of plants in the number and arrangement of leaves ; in the number and arrangement of the parts of the flower ; in the form of the seed vessel. The more complex the effects or the causes considered, the less able shall we be to affirm a complete agreement, or such an agreement as to secure the safety of our argument. Medicine, administered to a patient, is only one among many and most active and efficacious causes ; we shall trace its effects, therefore, with great uncertainty in the results, and cannot conclude, at once, that these will be the same in each case.

There is, hence, often the semblance of proof without any real strength in its connections. A superficial resemblance is argued from as if it were an inherent agreement : the premises include a likeness at one point, while the conclusion requires it at quite another : an effect which arises from a complex state is attributed to one of the causes at work, though, for aught that appears, this may be the least efficient of them all, or even adverse.

A comparison, therefore, becomes a most open and effective way for the admission of a fallacy. It appeals

to experience, carries its conclusions over with ease and directness, does not challenge criticism, and scarcely seems to suffer error. The substitution of apparent for real resemblance has sorely vexed philosophy, and rendered of no avail the logic of the most acute minds. This is well illustrated in the freedom of the will. If the will is free, it is thereby wholly unique, wholly unlike anything in nature, and, therefore, can be approached or expounded by no resemblance whatsoever. Its chief characteristic is, by the supposition of freedom, radically diverse from everything else. To affirm that a motive has influence, and afterward proceed to analyze this word "influence" by the analogies of the physical world, is of necessity to destroy the idea we are treating. By comparing influence in the one field of liberty to influence in the other of necessity, we hide in the very word the notion of necessity, and afterward, of course, succeed by analysis in reaching it. We conceal the goblet in Benjamin's sack, and then pluck it out as triumphant proof against him.

Of the second form of fallacy, in which resemblance at one point is substituted for resemblance at another, the argument turning on a different consideration from that brought forward in the premises, an ever-returning illustration is found in the justification of an action on the ground of its fitness at some previous time. Pres-

ent conditions and relations determine the rightness of action. To justify an institution, therefore, by comparing it with one previously accepted, is fallacious, unless we can also show an identity of circumstances. Once right, always right, is not an axiom of morals. It precludes the idea of progress, which is their basis.

Medicine is fruitful in examples of the third fallacy, confidently expecting from one cause effects due to many causes. There is here the opportunity of a double error. The premises may be erroneous, effects being referred to a given remedy which do not belong to it; the argument may be misapplied, there not being in the two cases an agreement of efficient circumstances. The pleasing and effective nature of comparison, turning the attention from the logical limits of the argument involved to the resemblance of familiar objects, should make us the more careful in scrutinizing its character.

Though the form of knowledge is given in the regulative ideas of the mind, the contents of this form, the great bulk of knowledge, is furnished by experience. What is? In what manner is it? are questions which the race, from the beginning, have been busy in answering. This knowledge, accumulated by the joint efforts of men, comes to the individual testified to by those who have gone before him, and the larger share of his knowledge is referable, not to personal experience, but

to testimony. Testimony is the great source of facts and principles to the individual, and proof is often resolved into the credibility of testimony. This itself is determined by experience, and is chiefly dependent on the knowledge and integrity of the witness, weighed with the opportunities he may have had for the one, and with the motives which tend to sway him from the other.

An easy fallacy of testimony is confounding facts with conclusions drawn from them. For competent testimony to the first, actual observation is all that is requisite. Men, though by no means equal in their power to observe or report events, are so relatively. The value of an opinion, on the other hand, depends almost exclusively on him who gives it. False conclusions, therefore, disguised under the facts, and stated as a portion of them, may readily embarrass testimony and mislead the judgment. A man is said to be insolent, to be proud, to be angry, to be drunk. It is a question, not purely of facts, but of inference from words and actions.

Certain circumstances, forming a chain of proof, are to be given. The mind may have already united them by a theory of its own, and, if so, inevitably gives coloring and relation to them according to its own explanation of them. In a science like mental philosophy, it



is much more than half the labor to secure impartial testimony to naked phenomena of mind. This error is often mingled with one already referred to. A patient testifies to the effect of medicine as if his statement were the explicit delivery of facts, and not the most uncertain of all opinions. On an agricultural question, as the effect on a crop of this or that mode of treatment,—on a social question, as the results of this or that institution,—it is most difficult to secure the facts, so enlarged, retrenched, and warped are they by the unconscious influence of opinion.

Hence is it that the mind relies so much on the undesigned coincidence of testimony. The perverting elements of interest and feeling are eliminated, and the essential truth of the statements becomes requisite to explain their agreement.

Here appears a new form of experience. When we know the causes, we readily reason from them to their effects; but when we are ignorant of them, or they are too various and irregular to be separately estimated, we yet draw conclusions often possessed of great certainty. A calculation of chances, though sometimes leading to results of little worth for a single transaction, may yet afford safe guidance as cases multiply.

Accidents assume a certain equality, preserve a certain ratio, when taken in large numbers. Accidents are not

uncaused events, but events which have no stated cause. Under given circumstances, on a large field, they assume certain limits. From these limits they do not greatly vary. If they were to vary, either to increase or diminish, it would imply the pressure of some steady force, securing this result. The effect would be no longer accidental.

Dice thrown a large number of times will show equality in the presentation of the several faces. If, however, there was a steady tendency discoverable to present one number, this would be adequate proof that the dice were not fairly made, — that there was in them some inequality of weight.

In the accidents by which property is destroyed, when we have measured the limits reached by any one form of loss, as by fire, on a field large enough to include the whole range of chances; we are sure that these will not be much overpassed without some assignable, general, and steady cause. In other words, there is a gauge of partial and fluctuating causes, which experience teaches us may be taken, and that accidents, because they are accidents, can show no steady tendency to preponderate on the one side or the other.

What is termed circumstantial evidence depends chiefly on a calculation of chances. A dozen things, which might with little difficulty be accounted for sepa-

rately, together form a network of proof from which there is no escape. The distinct threads now draw together, and, as in a cord, must be broken at once. On what supposition shall they *all* be accounted for? is the pregnant question. The chances that one solution should solve them all, and not be the true solution, are as the chances that a key shall open a complex lock, and not be *the* key.

In reasoning from a calculation of chances, two points are of importance: that the number of cases taken be so great as to include the extreme range of accident, — an entire cycle of chances; — and that in passing from one field to another there remains a perfect agreement in the known causes at work. Where these cannot be readily estimated, the measurement of chances must be again taken, so as to include them. The loss of fire in cities must obviously be greater than in the country, and in one city than in another, according to the material employed in building. But the amount of these differences can be ascertained only by independent calculations.

Proof, or evidence, may be of two kinds — intuitive or ratiōative. The intuitive faculties are the most immediate and satisfactory sources of proof. The man who cannot be convinced by seeing, cannot be convinced at all; nay, has lost the very use of

those faculties through which conviction comes. It is no assumption to start with all that any faculty testifies to. It is a most perplexing and impossible form of proof to struggle to establish through argument what rests on the immediate insight of the mind. Axioms cannot be proved save as axioms. Doubt them as axioms, and they are forever lost. That is a most perverse rhetoric which strives to get lower than the foundations. The testimony of the mind should be taken, where it can be taken, without hesitancy or distrust. Let the mind lose trust in itself, and all adroitness of argument afterward becomes, like the skill of an equilibrist, of no practical value. There is no conviction so deep and perfect as that which arises when man's moral nature is directly appealed to, and the testimony of the reason invoked. Every other witness is far off, compared with conscience.

Arguments are of two kinds—inductive and deductive: the differences between them are radical. Inductive reasoning proceeds from specific examples to a general principle, inclusive of all kindred cases. Deductive reasoning evolves from a general truth or principle what is contained in it. In the one case, the conclusion reaches beyond the premises; in the other, it is included within them. In induction the argument rests on resemblance, and springs from experience; it passes from

like to like, from what has been to what shall be, ever assuming the permanent, self-consistent character of causes. In deduction the argument is a logical evolution of principles oftentimes wholly independent of experience. Induction is never, and can never be, demonstrative. There is more affirmed in the conclusion than is given in the premises. With no insight into the nature of causes, we learn their effects from experience, and under its guidance anticipate similar results in future, without being able to establish an absolute identity, but only a more or less perfect resemblance of causes. The conviction, that the same cause will ever produce the same effect, is axiomatic, and does not, when involved, destroy the demonstrative character of an argument. Induction and experience fail of absolute proof by not being able to establish identity of causes, and by being constantly compelled to assume this on the ground of resemblances more or less perfect.

Deductive evidence, on the other hand, meets the conditions of a complete syllogism, is always demonstrative in form, and would be so in fact, did it not often start with principles resting only on induction. The reasoning of mathematics is demonstrative, because it unfolds what is contained in ideas distinctly and necessarily present to the mind. If, taught by experience, we secure a distinct notion, an adequate definition, of a

force in nature, we may demonstratively unfold its effects when assumed as present under given conditions. This is done in mechanics, in astronomy, and proof resting originally on induction becomes demonstrative through the simple and defined character of the causes concerned. Deduction, strictly, is always demonstrative. The argument, if correct, is adequate from the given premises to absolutely prove the conclusion. If any doubt enters, it does not attach to the deductive process, but to some of the steps preparatory to it. The syllogism is in its perfect form demonstrative, no matter what its contents. All deductive argument assumes the perfect form.

Virtue and intelligence secure success.

A. has virtue and intelligence.

Therefore A. will succeed.

This is a deductive argument. Success is evolved from A.'s virtue and intelligence. No doubt can enter between the premises and the conclusions. The deductive steps are just as demonstrative as those of mathematics. If any distrust still lingers about the conclusion, it must arise either from the minor premise — a disbelief in the fact of A.'s virtue and intelligence — or from the major premise — a doubt of the correctness

of the induction, by which, from given cases, the principle is established.

It is a mistake to suppose that what is sometimes termed moral evidence is not, in many of its forms, demonstrative. The circumstances, however, with which it deals, are not often so well known or established as to allow it to avail itself of this fact. In this respect it is like mixed mathematics. A hypothetical system of morals can readily be constructed, demonstrative in all its parts. The preacher, at least, has quite as often to do with deductive as with inductive argument — to unfold and apply what is conceded as to establish principles. The lawyer and statesman, on the other hand, dealing with facts, must constantly guide their steps by experience, and rest their conclusions on the history of the past. The process is more often the establishment of a principle, or the including of a given case under a principle, than the deductive unfolding of the principle itself.

A chief difficulty in the reasonings which pertain to ordinary life, is a want of precision in the terms employed. Words shift their force in the same connection, contain more in the conclusion than in the premises, more for one mind than for another, and thus the argument staggers or sinks altogether, from the fleeting character of the floating symbols on which it traverses

the tide of talk. In the proof above given, as accurate as most, what precisely is meant by success, and what degree of virtue and intelligence is requisite to secure it? So various are the forces which oppose progress, so various the power which virtue brings against them, that the most which can be affirmed with absolute certainty is, that all degrees of virtue and intelligence favor success, and that any high degree will usually secure it. Life fails to be reduced to a demonstration, not from the uncertainty of the connections, the dependences between things, but from our uncertain hold of the things themselves. Definition is the basis of demonstration, and our ordinary notions are at masquerade, because we so poorly define them. They elude us; they are never themselves; never twice alike; and have no false connections, because they have no true ones. Science is little more than accuracy, than definition; and where this can be reached, argument quickly approaches absolute proof. In philosophical productions, where the precision and justness of the thought are everything, all must proceed from the most clear and well-defined ideas, and the laws of thought become the laws of composition. In oratory, however, the argument is used, not presented, and this fact gives us some further principles. Truth is not furnished for its own



sake, but proof is urged as the motive and basis of just action.

A first principle, therefore, is, that proof should be strictly pertinent, called for by the end in view. To present arguments, however just in themselves, which are not needed to bring the will into action, is at very best a loss of time, and usually, therefore, a loss of interest and opportunity.

To determine what is requisite in argument, we need to know what we can trust to the intuitions of our audience. A direct appeal to their own sense of truth and right is, when first principles are involved, by far the most efficacious method, both because this is the appropriate proof of such principles, and because it indicates our reliance on their integrity and honesty, and makes them cheerful parties to the conclusion. On the other hand, subtle arguments on such points are always unsatisfactory; the auditor is thrown into a cold, critical state; and a spirit of scepticism is evoked, which will not be readily laid.

We should also know what is already admitted by those addressed, that on these points, if the argument is treated at all, it may be in the most succinct statement. Let it not seem, for an instant, that a question encumbered with serious difficulties is to be handled at a safe distance in its obvious features, with an oversight

of its more perplexed parts. The impression of boldness, directness, and thoroughness of argument are worth everything.

It is also a preliminary point of some moment to determine with whom the burden of proof lies. If it rests with one's opponent, this fact affords a just and often very grave advantage. In this case, as when one defends a citadel, not to be vanquished is to vanquish. After each unsuccessful assault, the holder is left in more secure possession. It is a just advantage, since it arises from the nature of the case. No one is called on to prove innocency. The accusation of guilt must be specific and well established, and it is sufficient to meet it when presented. One quietly conscious of integrity will not be put on his defence, will not entertain the necessity of proof, till the danger becomes distinct and imminent. Virtue rests on a silent appeal to character; guilt must be established by proof.

All that is, either as springing from nature, or from the opinions of men, has in its favor the presumption of right. Action and opinion, if changed rationally, must be changed for a reason. Whatever a custom may be, therefore, before laying it aside, or adopting a new method, we justly demand an adequate motive — proof of its impropriety, proof of the superiority of that offered in its place. Till this is given, we rightly

remain where we are. However much one may be haunted with a vague notion of the unreliable character of the opinions which education or accident have made his, he cannot wisely reject them, till, one by one, they have been satisfactorily disproved. It is more rational to content one's self with an old lie, an old doubt, than it is to accept a new one; since, by the supposition, we have not improved our position by changing it, and have therein acted without a motive. A good illustration of the advantage afforded by the burden of proof resting on an adversary is seen in the establishment of any religious form. The presumption is, that the form of any action, if not explicitly defined and enjoined, is unimportant. Hence the advocates of any one form must establish it, not by establishing the action itself, but by the explicit enforcement of it under the given method, to the exclusion of every other.

The burden of proof, like occupancy, affords an advantage which ought not to be resigned unless in view of easy and certain success. Once waived, and the argument entered on, it cannot be readily recovered. We may decline to enter the field of debate on the ground that it cannot be claimed of us; but being pushed, we cannot so readily retreat to the assumption of right

Having settled what must be proved to secure rational

conviction, it remains to choose and arrange our arguments. A chief principle here is, their careful adaptation, in matter and manner, to the powers of the persons addressed. Arguments are more often obscure through the language used, than through any inherent abstruseness of thought. The educated mind is more and more removed from the popular mind in the form of its ideas and their manner of expression. Terms used in a technical and limited signification become not only familiar to it, but the staple of its vocabulary, and its ideas assume a mode of expression so diverse from that of ordinary speech as effectually to perplex the untrained mind.

Whatever the subject matter, language, illustration, must have sole reference to the hearers. It cannot be too familiar and easy. It must be made for them the most perfect and perspicuous medium of thought. It is the skill, the instinct, of the orator, that teaches him where and how to find his audience.

There is also a choice in arguments. Not those most conclusive, but those most convincing, are to be taken. The intricacy of a deductive argument which taxes to the utmost the intellect is highly unfavorable to oratory, since it leaves the mind weary, prepared for rest, not aroused by quick flashes of truth to earnest action. Comparisons and examples, though less accurate, are

much more efficacious methods of proof. The audience is brought to the conclusion in the freshness of its power, quickened, not taxed, by thought.

Rapidity thus becomes an important element of success. To dwell long on arguments, or to convince by their laborious accumulation, makes the way tedious, and the hearers are either exhausted by it or cease to follow it. If the mind is to be set aglow, there must be quickness of movement; and once brought to the right point, it cannot long be retained there. Strike while the iron is hot, is a precept of broad application. The effort to gather up the details of an argument may, by restoring the attention to particulars, to minutiae of proof, so cool the mind that it shall become less and less pliant to our purpose. The exact measure of rapidity which the orator should employ must depend on the power of the audience. We cannot move successfully faster, nor much slower, than the minds of those who listen. The attention is more fixed, and a stronger effect produced, by a thorough treatment of a few arguments than by their multiplication. The uncultivated are especially impatient of protracted proof. Their opinions are formed hastily by a few points well put.

Proof requires impression almost as much as matter less logical. To evolve an argument, and urge it from many sides till it comes to possess the mind, is most

essential. The mere statement of proof is cold and barren. Conduct is not so wedded to conviction as this would imply.

The arrangement of arguments must be such as to secure a growth of impression. It cannot, therefore, proceed from greater to less. Nor need the order be exclusively that of a climax, since a growth of convictions may often be secured without this. As in a sentence, the earlier and later positions, those considerations which first invite and last occupy the mind, are most important. Attention should be commanded by the weight of the proof brought forward; and the mind should be confirmed in its convictions by an effective, final point. Arguments much below the level of those adduced with them, hardly add to the strength of a cause. The necessity of employing them implies weakness, and they are liable to weary the mind, and to render it suspicious.

Arguments, of course, come early in the oration. They occupy the mind while it is yet quiet, and clear the way for rational feeling. No sooner is the subject before the mind, than it wishes to know the ground of action: to state and establish this becomes the immediate duty of the speaker. The argumentative and emotional parts of discourse are not so much distinct sections, readily separable and following one the other,

as interwoven members everywhere sustaining each other. The feeling must begin to arise with the argument, and the argument can only close at the full tide of feeling. The earlier movement is more exclusively thoughtful, the later more strikingly impulsive; but the emotion has sprung up everywhere in the track of truth, and to the very end is nourished by the argument to which in quick snatches of conviction it is ever returning. Like opposite poles in the electric current, they rest on each other, and coëxist everywhere.

Different forms of oratory stand in different relations to the argument. Pulpit oratory has more occasion to enforce and apply than to establish truth; the bar is chiefly occupied with the more strict processes of proof. The first, with more undoubted claims, and less delayed by the exigencies of argument, can bring forward more confidently and quickly the stirring appeal, and press onward to the immediate end of action.

Misled by this general conviction of the goodness of the cause, and freed from attack, the sacred orator may become less cautious of the soundness of the considerations advanced, and commit the unpardonable error of weak and puerile argument employed in the defence of unmistakable truths. The cause is thus damaged by those who sustain it. A more common mistake, resting on the conviction of undeniable right, is the hortatory

form which discourse often assumes from the beginning to the end. Now, exhortation requires a basis, if not in argument, yet in presentation. Not till truth has been more vividly brought before the mind, or more broadly unfolded, is it prepared with any new energy to espouse or obey it. Exhortation is properly the conclusion, not the body, of discourse. There are at this point two opposed errors, almost equally fatal, which men fall into according to their several characteristics — a direct appeal without that presentation of truth which gives it propriety and power ; a discussion of principles without that enforcement which gives them value. It is only when the body of thought is animated by fitting emotion, that we have a living product ; only when the will is reached through the intellect as well as the heart, that man achieves progress.

As the truths which the minister enforces stand in various relations, and are chosen not in reference to any one mooted question, the sermon demands and receives an application. The whole armament is turned upon a single point, and from this concentration of aim the effort receives its law, and becomes an oration

The lawyer, on the other hand, has constantly occasion to discuss and establish the ever-doubtful conditions of action, and can do nothing rightly till some basis of action has been found in fact or in law. The plea,



therefore, is preëminently argumentative; and as proof is often difficult, it is made exhaustive, and every consideration is thrown into the vacillating balance. Plausibility — a preparation for proof, rather than proof itself — here often becomes important. Events separately established are to be united into a narrative, natural in all its connections. The facts proved, when thus concurring, have their full force, and the way of argument is made easy. When the facts are undoubted, plausibility may be neglected; but when all the resources of proof are requisite, its strength cannot be further taxed by inherent improbability.

A first consideration in treating an opponent is candor and fairness, for what they are in themselves, in their effect on others, and in the strength they imply. Thorough knowledge and a calm confidence of success beget these qualities, and these in turn become their index. The irritable acrimony, the assumed contempt, with which an adversary is often treated, are feeble makeshifts, and evidence of a mind seeking personal ends rather than truth. Conviction is often readily secured by the fairness with which a real difficulty is stated and removed, when it could not possibly be reached by any amount of independent proof. This principle is of broad application, but is possessed of

special force in legal oratory, already too much suspected of petty devices and sharp practice.

That an opponent's arguments should be met and answered at the proper time is a point of some importance. To answer objections at the outset, whether urged by another or known already to exist, may frequently consume too much time, embarrass the argument, and be less satisfactory than when this is done in connection with the just view which the speaker himself is to propose. There are cases, however, which will not admit delay. The mind is so occupied by difficulties as to be closed to any argument till these are removed. An important rule is, when the hearer is preoccupied either by the arguments of an adversary or opinions of his own, these must be in a measure met, preparatory to an independent presentation of opposing principles. When, however, the mind is sufficiently candid and open to give due weight to what is urged, the most easy and complete refutation of false opinions will be made in connection with an establishment of the truth. It then becomes natural to mark the lines of deviation which error has taken.

A common fallacy is to attach too much consequence to the refutation of a single argument. As arguments often stand alone, it may be a point of little moment

that one has been overthrown. The *éclat*, however, which attends a successful refutation, and the quick judgment which is arrived at, that remaining considerations are of the same character, sometimes make an unimportant advantage equivalent to a complete overthrow. The popular mind judges so much by retorts, by the apparent relations of parties, as to render shallow adroitness in debate more than a match for awkward and ponderous strength. Here is furnished another reason why any position relatively weak should not be taken, lest its overthrow prove the signal of defeat. There is often a panic in discussion, as in arms.

In debate a speech does not stand in connection with the subject and audience merely, but with the exigencies of the instant. It becomes the part of a more inclusive whole, and is alone no longer a symmetrical production. It assumes the argument and passion already put forth, and unites itself to the movement at the point which these may have reached. Not to be able to do this is to fail.

Argument, the subject now presented, is the basis of permanent success. No one can, no one ought, long to succeed without supporting the truth, and without its support. Here lies the justice, and therefore the strength, of one's cause. All forms of knowl-

edge are the sources and instruments of argument. It is by a broad survey of real relations alone, that one can discover and maintain the truth. Rhetorical culture implies all other culture, and must have it. Nothing is more superficial than superficial oratory. Eloquence roots itself in all knowledge, and only a rich soil can yield a rank, native growth.

## CHAPTER III.

## EMOTIONS.

INTERMEDIATE between the intellect and the will, in the line of action, lie the emotions. Through these, desire is called forth, the will determined, and the whole man set in motion. Thought becomes power only by the intervention of feeling, and is judged, therefore, by the orator solely in reference to the emotions it is fitted to arouse, and the relation of these to the end in view. Neither the laws of thought nor of feeling alone are considered by him, but both in their connections with each other and with the will. Thus only can all the complex conditions of a volition, the fulness and completion of mental activity, be reached. Oratory is the dynamics of mind. It contemplates it aroused and active, and studies the laws of the forces which then control it.

A first condition of easy and perfect success in arousing emotion is the sympathy of those who are to experience it with him who calls it forth. Fire is kindled by fire, feeling by feeling. A cold statement of appro-

priate truths does not necessitate warmth of conviction in the hearer any more than the heaping up of combustible material secures heat. The spark of ignition must come from the earnestness of the speaker. He is the fountain of feeling, and looking with him at the subject, the audience insensibly catch his emotion. Great dramatic art may show some exceptions, but the chief condition on which the power of the speaker to make others feel deeply will depend, is depth in his own emotions.

But this feeling cannot be transferred without that sympathy which removes opposition, and leaves the hearer open to the subject presented. It is by concurrent thinking the heart is to be aroused; and if each movement is arrested by the barrier of prejudice, each effort met with a counter effort, there can be no community of action.

The opinion which the audience entertain of the speaker thus becomes an important consideration, since by it the way of influence is opened or closed. It may be said that justice requires that beliefs should be separated from persons, and judged on their own abstract merit. However true this may be in given instances, the mass of conclusions are not so reached. Persons and opinions are identified, and views are greatly prejudiced or promoted by the character of those

who hold them. This is unavoidable, and, for the most part, not undesirable. Complex questions must, in the bustle of life, be settled, not always by considerations truly fundamental and carefully considered, but often also by superficial marks and tendencies more quickly reached. Among these secondary indications of the character of opinions, few are more reliable than the purposes and influence of those who sustain them. One can often decide by these when not able to form a well-balanced opinion on the case itself. It is in vain to try to rob men of this quick and generally just method of judging measures. To distrust the man, and trust his schemes, is too nice an *equipoisè* of mind for most purposes, or most men. The agent gives character to the agency, and becomes its efficient moral force.

This is perfectly just so far as the person seeking to exert influence is concerned. He ought to be held to a rigorous account as to the method in which he has hitherto employed power, the opinions he has advocated, and the paths in which he has sought to lead men. Virtue ought to accumulate strength, vice to lose it. Benevolence ought to win favor, and selfishness to forfeit it; integrity to secure confidence, and trickery to destroy it. The momentum and power of personal character are a most wholesome law in the world.

The points at which the character of the speaker is chiefly judged are intelligence and virtue. Of these the last is obviously the most important. Intelligence alone only increases the power to deceive; suspicion is on the alert, and will not suffer the mind to accept just reasoning, lest it be found a gloss of language. A distrust of one's virtue may lead to the immediate rejection of discourse; of one's intelligence, to a more careful and scrutinizing inquiry into it. In the one case, the character of the speaker turns us from him; in the other, draws us to him, and disposes us to give his opinions honest consideration. The admiration which genius excites, however, in part counteracts this tendency, and gives an undue weight to the intellectual element in character.

The relation of the speaker to a sect or party may also be an occasion of prejudice against him. Partisan feelings are stronger and blinder in the illiterate than in the more intelligent. The one class rest their opinions on conviction, and neither need nor seek any firmness beyond that derived from views deliberately formed and discriminatingly held. They are both able and willing to canvass a subject whose bearings they understand. The other class, arriving at their views largely by accidental and external influences, steady themselves in them by the superinduced obstinacy of party feeling,



and do not venture on discussion beyond a few familiar cant phrases, conscious that their power is not here. Liable, if they once give way to argument, to be blown about at random, they make it a first principle of honesty and honor to adhere faithfully to any party or sect with which caprice or accident has identified them. As change, with their limited ability to canvass all its motives, would be capricious, they arm themselves against it by personal and party obstinacy. They yield to a first caprice, and ever after abjure it. Partisan feelings, taking the place of deep convictions, are very strong with the ignorant. Though blindly driven by old leaders, they do not readily yield to new ones. When these prejudices, therefore, lie in the way of the orator, they require skilful treatment, lest in the outset they extinguish all sympathy.

Allied to differences of party are differences of doctrine. Doctrine often assumes so settled and obdurate a form as to close the mind to all opposing considerations, and cut off the opportunity of conviction. A creed made up is like a fortress with its defences, and cannot be lightly approached. If it be the difficult task of the orator to attack opinions and customs long established, a conciliatory and adroit method is requisite to obtain an honest hearing — a thing most rare among rare things.

The most important office of introductions is that of conciliation. A favorable state of feeling is, if possible, to be assumed. It is one of the more offensive forms of egotism to refer, at the outset, to one's personal relations to the audience, when these are not prominent, — to assume the existence of hostile feeling, when there is little or no feeling. When, however, either the speaker or subject stands in an obviously unfavorable light before the audience, a conciliatory introduction, winning favor, or at least attention, becomes a matter of great importance. A fair hearing for one's self or subject may be invoked, the generosity and candor of the hearer appealed to, and the motives which urge to a broad and kind consideration of all the points involved be pressed.

The general office of an introduction is to secure concurrent sympathetic action between the speaker and listener. When conciliation is not required, it may still be necessary to win attention, and to lead the thoughts, with some interest and expectation, to the theme. In proportion as the subject is before the minds of all, and has secured the interest of all, does an introduction become short and unimportant, since the condition of sympathetic action is already present.

The qualities in the speaker which win interest and attention are frankness, earnestness, and self-control.

An undisguised and open method inspires confidence, and assures us of the honesty of the speaker. We feel that we are not to be practised upon, and may, at our ease, listen to that which shall be said. Earnestness is always pleasing, and especially so in the presentation of opinions, as it implies confidence in them and attachment to them.

No man fails to feel the power of an earnest manner. There is an honesty in it which works conviction. Self-control, controlled emotion, is always requisite for the orator. Men are not to be driven by wild gusts of passion, but to be urged by just feelings springing from correct views. The speaker occupies the position of an adviser and guide, and no one can direct wisely who does not perfectly govern himself. No burst of oratory can, to advantage, pass the limit of perfect self-control. The orator must ever command the expression, and shape it strictly in view of the exigencies of the subject and the occasion. It is not every theme which will admit strong emotion, and misplaced eloquence is bombast. The theme must be the adequate source of all feeling which is employed in urging it.

Feeling, on the part of the orator, which seems to the audience excessive, destroys sympathy, and produces an effect quite the opposite of that intended. This may arise, not only from uncontrolled passion, but also from

the too great rapidity with which the subject sometimes acts on the mind of the speaker. He must not only commence where the listener is, but be sure to keep with him through all the discussion. When the orator dissevers himself from the audience, and hastens on under his own momentum, he soon becomes a spectacle to idle or critical lookers-on. The increments of motion, as when an engine toils at its load, are often small in oratory. Precipitation then becomes disruption and failure. In brief, sympathy — that is, unity of action — must both be secured and maintained: when this is lost, success becomes impossible

Aside from the direct relations of the speaker, subject, and audience, sympathy may be increased by many incidental methods. The circumstances of the occasion, the imagery and language employed, associated incidents, may furnish means by which to arouse and harmonize the feelings. Quick insight, delicate appreciation, and ready resources must belong to the orator, that he may at once apprehend the exigencies of the case. He must first measure, and then meet, the moral state in and on which he is to work; and the most trifling expedients, when prompted by the sagacity of a quick sympathy, may prepare the way for success. All speaking, all personal influence, is a strife between different and adverse states of mind which shall overcome and

displace the other. The apathy of the audience may overpower the speaker, or the animation of the speaker may arouse the audience : the first result is dulness ; the second, eloquence. To establish at any related point a oneness of interest and thought, is a preparation for success.

The harmony of mental action, of which we have spoken, is not less necessary for the pleasurable and powerful movement of the mind of the speaker than for the right reception of what is said. While the orator is the source of influence, he is also the recipient of influence. The audience speedily begin to react upon him, and the processes of thought commenced, the emotion aroused, can only be sustained and completed when he, in full sympathy with those addressed, feels the impulse of concurrent sentiment, the strength of growing emotion and deepening conviction. Nothing is more destructive of mental effort than the inattention and indifference of those for whom it is instituted. The inspiration of thought is its effectiveness. Sympathy does not so much imply the absolute acquiescence of all in the views advanced as the attention and interest of all — a simultaneous movement of all minds under the direction of one toward a single object.

When we remember that the oration is not simply an argument, a logical process, but a product filled with

vitality, through the vitality of the speaker, a weighing out in overwhelming counterpoise the enthusiasm and convictions of his soul against the indifference and unbelief of others, we see at once how great and exhausting is the effort, how the whole man is taxed in the struggle, and the more taxed as the audience becomes larger and the oratory complete.

Sympathy with the mental movements of the orator, by which he is made the medium through which the subject is viewed and felt, we have shown to be the condition of all emotion. The feelings to be aroused, and the methods by which this is done, demand further attention.

The emotions have sometimes been divided by their relation to action into three classes: those which excite effort, those which restrain it, and those indifferent to it. This is not a permanent division, since the same emotion, under different circumstances, may belong to each of the classes. Fear, ordinarily used to restrain action, may almost as readily call it forth, or simply leave the mind apprehensive without any explicit determination. There is, however, this difference in the emotions aroused by oratory compared with those elicited by poetry, that the former, as at the time employed, have connection with some definite action, either tending to secure or restrain it; while the latter either occupy the mind without directing it, or exert a general influence not determined

toward any single effort. This determination of feeling toward a definite action is oratorical.

The emotions constitutionally strongest in man are the affections which arise in connection with his moral nature. Through these, he is most deeply and justly influenced, and to know how to move them becomes the secret of benign and permanent persuasion. Closely allied with the moral sympathies as motives of action are the tastes.

A second more constantly and immediately operative class of feelings are those of self-interest. As they are not in themselves wrong, and only become so through that perverted or excessive action by which they lapse into passion, they also afford a constant means of persuasion. Neither at this nor at any other legitimate point does influence trench on the liberty of man. The whole career of a rational being is one of giving and receiving influence. Almost every movement of man among his fellows is one of persuasion, of inducements offered or taken, of example set for others or received from them, of custom current by common enforcement, of words spoken or heard. Liberty is not liberty from influence, but the liberty to be influenced by the most numerous and various considerations.

A third class of feelings through which conduct is, unfortunately too often, affected, are those arising from a

direct appeal to appetite and passion. To persuasion accomplished by these forces we cannot accord the title of eloquence, at least so far as it violates the law of just influence, and binds the man by base means to a base purpose. Oratory has nothing to do with this class of motives save to reprobate them, as resulting in that debasement of mind which must ultimately sweep away all higher inducements and forms of action.

The sources of influence are, then, the affections, the tastes, and interests of men. If we are correct in affirming, that, constitutionally, right is the supreme law enthroned in every man, the moral affections become the soundest, safest means of persuasion. When the effective motive really relied on is self-interest, it does not follow that more noble considerations may be safely overlooked. When convinced that action is right, men will push farther and more boldly in it, though this fact be with them only an ostensible motive covering a more selfish impulse. It is the duty and advantage of the orator to furnish the best motives, though they may not be found solely the efficacious ones. If the greater may not exclude the less, certainly the less may not lead to an oversight of the greater. The oftener and bolder the appeal to that which is highest in man, the firmer and more legitimate is the influence established. When the question is one of interest, with no obvious



moral relation, while the discussion should conform to the fact, oratory is greatly restricted by it. The canon, that the good man alone is the orator, has been so often recognized by rhetoricians because of the superior hold which virtue gives to those motives and emotions by which, under a divine ordinance in man's nature, truth and right are carried from mind to mind. He who has no hold on the conscience must work uncertainly toward transient and superficial ends. While not in form accepting the assertion that eloquence is virtue, we would say, that it thence derives its life.

The purpose and circumstances of the oration must define the emotions called for, and the question then becomes important, How shall these be secured? Feeling springs up in view of certain objects or truths fitted to call it forth, and it is, therefore, a first labor to present and establish these. This is the province of argument, already spoken of, and the soundness of this is the occasion and justification of the emotions excited. The mind is most deeply moved by truth. Fiction acts, indeed, strongly on the feelings, yet, in part, because the absorption of the mind in the narrative leads it to overlook its unreality, and to accept its creations as real personages. When we wish to quiet the emotion excited, it is done by reverting to the fact of the fictitious character of the events. Plausibility, naturalness, and

adhesion to the truth of character and relations — the most weighty of all truths — justly give the novel a hold on the heart. This, in the rightly-governed mind, is its only hold. The feeling aroused by fiction is not that of oratory, and chiefly because the subject matter lacks that entire truth which belongs to the latter. The novel usually gives no definite direction to the emotion it excites, and thereby enervates the voluntary and active powers. Oratory, resting on naked truth, calls the whole nature into use, and thus invigorates it. Suitable facts and principles, those which involve the action proposed, are the first and indispensable steps toward complete and permanent conversion to our purpose.

Among the many opinions received and doctrines conceded, comparatively few are constantly operative on conduct. To secure this obedience, there must be a clearness of apprehension and depth of conviction which belong only to a few familiar and governing principles. It is chiefly for this reason that persuasion becomes requisite. Truths are to be restated and reëstablished, their consequences traced, their relation to present action seen, and the fearful force with which they shape events impressed on the mind. It is thus that the chasm between knowing and doing is filled. Facts and principles are first proved, and then enforced by a survey

of their relation to ourselves, to the events and persons about us, to the future in its more immediate and remote events. The action proposed is shown to spring from the case in hand, and to be of importance.

Exhortation to feeling, which does not supply these its conditions, harasses and wearies the mind, and leaves it more dead than ever. The vividness of ideas is largely dependent on the imagination. Of this we shall speak at a later point. Much oratorical effort has for its aim to attach the ideas under consideration to those most familiar and operative in the minds of the audience, and thus arouse concerning them that feeling which secures action.

Here we see the gradual growth in pathos as the speaker proceeds. The earlier steps are more coldly logical,—a truth is presented or established. As the thoughts begin to be occupied with it, it arouses interest, and works conviction. The importance of its relations is then unfolded; it is made in familiar imagery to stand out as a governing principle in conduct, affecting daily and dear interests. Its immediate claims on conduct are urged; and, according to the homely and emphatic expression, the truth is brought home to the heart; and this is oratory. That which was not in the mind, or lay on its very margin, is brought into its immediate presence, and made, like the work of the

painter, to fill the canvas, to stand distinctly and warmly out, in glowing colors.

A law of progress is thus established. The persuasive force steadily increases, till, in the conclusion, it is all gathered up, and applied to the purpose in hand. The movement of feeling is not precipitate or fitful, but well ordered and efficient, sustained by truth, and itself giving vitality to the truth. The growth of emotion, with and out of argument, gives it the needed validity and power, and renders it in full force at the moment when it is to be employed, when the mind passes from contemplation into action.

When a weighty impression has been produced, as by an advocate, it may become the inquiry, How shall this be so far removed that the minds of the jury may return to a candid rejudgment of the topic? Unfavorable feeling may be displaced directly or indirectly. It is directly displaced by overthrowing the foundations of proof on which it rests; or, assenting to the general truth of the statements, by pointing out the untrue or extravagant consequences which have been deduced from them, and that conclusions quite the reverse logically follow; or by showing that the subject is unimportant, meriting no immediate attention. Feeling is thus allayed by reversing the steps by which it has been aroused. It may sometimes, however, be so intense as

not to suffer this immediate and direct method. Time must be given for it somewhat to abate. The mind must be diverted to matter relatively indifferent, till, reverting to its ordinary state, it may again be occupied with a fair discussion of the theme. The mind is occasionally more readily vacated by considerations not wholly pertinent, than by those which call forth its opposition.

There are two processes of mind which are especially liable to interfere with securing and directing emotion. These are the logical and imaginative. The first, becoming too severe and pervasive, makes a sound, but often a very dull and ineffective speaker. The product is not sufficiently vital. The method is too coolly analytic, too cruelly anatomical, and, while those who choose to attend are instructed, attention and action are not necessitated. The heart needs to be more deeply moved — claims a larger part in the presentation.

The imagination may also escape control, and cease to serve the ends of the orator. In this case, attention is usually gained, but no practical bent given to the thoughts. Interest is secured, but not action. This is liable to be the error of an orator too eager for success, and not sufficiently occupied with the subject.

Much popular speaking is faulty in this direction, and relatively valueless for moral and social ends. A strong

desire to reach fully the given end is the great protection of the orator. This necessity makes the advocate explicit and plain in what he says. When the speaker must succeed or the failure become palpable and great, he has that which keeps him steadily in the one line of effort: he neither leaves the feelings dormant, nor arouses them to waste them.

## CHAPTER IV.

## IMAGINATION AND MEMORY.

AMONG the instrumental faculties there are two which the orator has constant occasion skilfully to employ — imagination and memory. For carrying on the processes of thought, these faculties are fundamental. That the mind should have power to retain and present to itself its conceptions is essential to all movement and clearness of thought. While, therefore, the imagination and memory are not active for their own sakes, their action is requisite for all the ulterior ends of thinking and feeling.

Imagination is more frequently employed to denote the power by which, through memory, we restore sensible phenomena, more especially those of vision, to the mind; or by which we construct images under kindred forms, subject to desire. That use of the term in which it designates the presentation by the mind to itself of all its conceptions, the most abstract, is less general and less immediately applicable to oratory.

The vividness and force of composition must depend largely on the skilful use of imagination.

Sensible objects are most immediate and strong in their hold on the mind. Our senses are a first, constant, and undoubted source of knowledge. Value and pleasure early and chiefly attach themselves to sensible objects: around these the associations of life cluster. Hence no form of knowledge is so full and determinate, so immediate in its hold on the mind, as that received through the senses. There is an effort constantly made to present all the difficult matter of science through diagrams, models, experiments, and specimens; since anything offered to the eye is thought of more avail than the most comprehensive description. That an orrery should become a medium of apprehending the solar system is a striking fact, showing with how short and weak a staff the mind sustains its steps.

A direct appeal to the senses is seldom open to the orator. He may sometimes recall the pictures of memory, and stir the mind powerfully through the image of vanished events; but even this opportunity is of rare occurrence. His chief resources in removing the truth from its abstract relations, in bringing it near to the mind, are illustration and resemblance—instances of the action of the principle in hand, a kindred relation of things in other departments. In these the orator



aims chiefly at the clearness and vivacity which it imparts, and needs therefore to draw his imagery with apt and close agreement from departments most interesting to the audience. The comparison seeks to avail itself of familiar facts to flash light on those less known or heeded. The torch is taken from the very hand of the spectator, and its blaze cast upon the object. The images of the imagination, therefore, must not merely be in themselves striking and illustrative, but must be drawn from facts which have already hold on the mind of the listener. Intimate knowledge of the habits of feeling belonging to the classes addressed is requisite to give the imagination high power.

It is the vividness of the ideas presented which arouse emotion, and thus carry over conviction into persuasion. Hence it is that the imagination plays so important a part in oratory. Truth comes forth from its systematic and logical connections, shows itself operative in the events about us, and establishes its claim on action by its harmony with facts, and by the many instances in which it has already proved effective. The mind sees it and presents it, not chiefly as a principle, but as a law controlling the phenomena of the world. Enforcing this view, and transferring the mind from speculations to facts, many instances crowd themselves upon the imagination. The nearer these are to the daily experience of

men, the more necessarily and successfully is the topic urged on their attention.

It is emotion in the speaker which arouses the imagination and fills the mind with imagery: thought can thus no longer proceed in naked statements, but at once seeks enforcement by a retinue of illustrative events. The imagination may not only be cultivated, but practically directed to oratorical ends by cherishing the tendency to observe the resemblances between moral and physical things. The world is an inexhaustible storehouse of images, and the mind that directs its attention to them will be more and more able to discover them. Since it is not sufficient, however, that the image in itself be perfect, but it must also be open to those addressed, a sympathy with men, with those to be immediately influenced, is indispensable to give to truth and its illustrations that pertinence and precision which impart to them their power. The ministry are more open to failure here than other classes of speakers, since, by their pursuits, they are liable to be more removed from men, and since their failures are disguised from them by the often remote and intangible character of the results expected. A definite end, pressing the mind and heart, is a great security to oratory. If all that is empty and worthless instantly shows itself to be so, the rebuke secures the remedy.

While the vividness of the impression made by the orator depends largely on the imagination, its permanence is due to its hold on the memory. A vivid impression does of itself tend, indeed, to permanence; yet there are other distinct considerations. An oration that pays no heed to the memory, that seeks neither to make perfect nor easy the performance of its duty, may be forcible for the moment, may have striking points, which may linger in the mind, but cannot unite to secure a single and permanent effect. The mind does not readily recall it, and thus cannot contemplate it as a single effort, strengthened by all its parts, and resting upon them all. The joint power, which should be the chief power, of the oration is largely lost without the free action of the memory.

The memory recalls objects by a variety of relations, but always proceeds on some definite connection. We may restore in memory the persons at any time present in an assembly by the order in which they were seated, by the time of their entrance, or by the part which they took in the proceedings. The connections of place, time, resemblance, cause and effect, dependence, are among the leading ones employed by memory. The more perfect and complete the relation, the more readily does memory, by means of it, bind the parts together. A close logical connection of members in a whole, of

reasons and conclusions, gives this faculty the greatest ease of movement. Any relation, however, which makes of the treatment a chain of linked ideas, will impart ease and certainty to the mind in traversing it, and compactness and power to the impression. This accumulative power of memory, closely allied to logical force, must be secured in all thorough and difficult work.

## CHAPTER V.

## WIT, HUMOR, AND RIDICULE.

COMPOSITION finds among its occasional means, wit, humor, and ridicule. The best definitions of wit and humor are those furnished by Sydney Smith. Wit is the surprise arising from an unexpected association of ideas; humor is the surprise arising from an unexpected association of things. Surprise and ideas are the important words in the first; surprise and things in the second definition. If any stronger feeling than surprise is aroused, the wit or the humor disappears. If the witticism is profane, to the religious mind it loses its force. Thus a truly noble object cannot be made the subject of degrading wit, while pretentious greatness at once becomes its butt. The dandy slipping into the ditch is a humorous object, but fracturing his limb, he becomes an object of pity.

Wit is distinguished from humor by pertaining to ideas rather than to persons or things. Wit thus is more transient, spends itself in sudden sallies, while humor is more continuous, follows the narrative in its

events, and makes up the comedy of life. Wit is more cutting and brilliant, humor more mild and pleasing; wit more admirable, humor more laughable; wit more to be feared, humor more to be loved.

Campbell has said, with but partial truth, that character alone is the appropriate subject of humor, and that it always occasions contempt. Man, having more character than the objects around him, can present more striking incongruities. Yet Rosinante was scarcely less an object of humor than his master. That contempt is not always inspired by humor is shown in the fact, that we so often strive to give this turn to the narrative of our own adventures. Yet humor, like good nature, seems to be thought a little incompatible with the highest dignity.

The resemblance of ideas in wit differs from that in comparison in extent. In the last case, the more complete and perfect the agreement the better; in the former, similarity at one point should be attended with striking diversity at all others. It is this unexpected union and quick recoil of ideas that please the mind. A pun is an agreement in sound with different meanings. The mind is instantly foiled in the natural completion of its work.

The justice of the above definitions is seen in the fact that wit so soon becomes stale. Surprise quickly

disappears, and then the connection no longer pleases us. So, too, retort has always the advantage over attack, since the latter suffers premeditation, the former does not. The suddenness and aptness of the junction enhance the surprise, and a witticism of equal intrinsic merit given in reply secures the victory. These definitions also explain our admiration of wit. It seems to indicate great quickness and breadth of thought, that slight connections in so diverse and remote objects should at once be seen.

The habit of mind, however, which wit cherishes, is obviously not desirable. Wit turns on secondary and trifling relations, not on fundamental agreements. The more philosophical our habits of observation, the more carefully and constantly we note important resemblances, the less shall we mark or treasure the trivial connections of wit. The movement of mind from which wit springs is opposed both to thorough and serious reflection, and ought not, therefore, to become habitual.

Nor is wit desirable as a constant accompaniment of composition or of conversation. The train of thought is too much diverted and interrupted by it. Take, for instance, the habit of punning. The pun demands a separate consideration of mere verbal relations. The thread of discourse is for the instant broken, and the

mind requires time to rally and reunite it. Let diversion of this sort recur several times, and the interest and attention due to the cardinal point are lost, and the main topic is abandoned amid the percussion of small wit. Undoubtedly, even the most serious discourse can, in the hands of a master, suffer occasional humor without detriment; but more frequently laughter is secured at the cost of conviction.

Another undesirable result of wit, when constantly employed, is the insatiable demand to which it gives rise. Men love to laugh better than to think; and the moment they find one who can indulge them in this respect, they require a constant exhibition of his power, and transform him, as far as possible, into a public buffoon. Great earnestness and strength of purpose are required to resist this tendency. The power is rare and exceedingly attractive, and flattering in the immediate popularity it confers. One who possesses it is strongly tempted on all occasions to indulge it, more and more to rely upon it, and thus ultimately becomes a cracker of jokes.

Notwithstanding these their dangers, wit and humor may subserve an important purpose. One can, indeed, succeed perfectly without them, but can do it a little more readily with them. To arouse interest, quicken the flagging attention, relieve protracted debate, aid an



unpopular theme, parry assault, carry home to the obtusest mind an argument, and afford a decent retreat or brilliant exit, wit is most efficient.

Ridicule is wit and humor used to influence opinion. This they can only do against the person who is their object. Placed in an unfavorable and humorous light, feelings of contempt or aversion are aroused toward him. Ridicule is a legitimate weapon when employed against absurdities and follies. The first cannot be exposed by argument, being already opposed to it. They can only be met by pointing out the ridiculous figure they make when viewed in the light of reason. The second are mere idiosyncrasies, arising by accident, half unconsciously. They are treated, therefore, by exposure rather than by reproof. A counterpoise to the force of habit is found in the ridicule to which they subject us.

Errors and faults, on the other hand, deserve and require in the outset more grave treatment, to be corrected by argument and reproof. Truth and right afford for these the just correction. When this remedy, however, has proved in whole or in part unavailing, they also may be lashed with ridicule. Public contempt drives men from positions which they will not yield to argument.

The form of composition set apart to ridicule is satire.

This alone is not very efficacious in reaching its end. An age will laugh with its satirists, and yet burn its reformers. There is in ridicule alone too much of mere good-natured humor, or of personal pique and misanthropy, greatly to disturb men. It requires settled benevolence, wisely, steadily, thoroughly pursuing a reformatory end, to arouse all their hate. Satire, as a secondary instrument, used with forbearance and love, or applied to the incorrigible enemies of truth, may serve a purpose. Irony is disguised ridicule, — an expression whose meaning is the reverse of what it seems.

## CHAPTER VI.

## LAWS OF LANGUAGE.

WE now come to speak of means somewhat more external, — somewhat less of the very essence and substance of discourse.

In composition, the material in which the product is wrought is language. The skilful and correct use of language, therefore, becomes indispensable to success in all forms of literary effort. We are not, however, to look on language as a means to be mechanically employed in expressing a thought already realized. The connection between thought and language is much more intimate and vital than this would imply. Thought is not only lodged and retained in language, — its very existence and form are conditioned on language.

All thinking proceeds by language, as all life proceeds by physical organs. Thinking is not the manipulation, the combination and resolution, of arbitrary signs, nor yet is it the coalescence of unembodied, undefined ideas into judgments. It is the union in propositions of definite conceptions previously fixed in words. Every

step in limitation and definition is a step in language. The separated idea is defined and retained in its limits by a word, and every movement of thought originates or employs a word. The word and idea measure each other. The word is not more nor less accurate than the idea, but is exactly what the idea has made it. Its very birth was in the idea which it measures and expresses. This is strictly true when the word is considered as belonging to the individual mind which uses it; but when the same word is employed by many, it then comes to have a more or less well-defined meaning, which the individual thought finds and accepts, rather than establishes. Words are the footprints of the mind; and though in a given case measured in their significance by the person who employs them, like footprints they are to mark the way for others, and assume a fixed position and outline in the progress of thought, which those travelling after more or less accurately hit.

While, therefore, language is instrumental in the mind's action, it is an instrument which realizes and measures the thought, and is the necessary organ of that force whose product it is. Language and thought coexist in mutual dependence — the form and substance of one thing.

Language is also the storehouse of knowledge, and this not merely, or chiefly, as arranged in definite lit-

erary productions, but in its words, and in the marks left upon these of the labors they have performed, and the changes they have suffered, in the service of thought.

The generalizations, the distinct conceptions, the discovered and defined ideas, forces, and laws of science, are expressed in appropriate terms; and to apprehend these in their present and past use, is to possess the history of science, and all its rallying points. Were it not that mental acquisitions could be thus readily and securely lodged in language, the mind could make but little progress. Its utmost strength would soon be demanded to hold in steady view the truths already realized. The thought already put forth within a given language, and treasured by the words of that language, measures the available power and advantage at once presented to every mind which uses it as the medium of its thinking. Men who employ different languages are possessed of very diverse facilities for accurate inquiry, and have very different amounts of labor rendered to their hand. The starting point of thought is given by language, and with the ideas already defined therein the mind proceeds in its work of distinction and discovery.

From the relation of language to thought it will be seen at once that it cannot be stationary. It must share the fortunes and express the changes of intellectual action so long as it remains speech,—a vehicle of

living thought. It may, by circumstances, be thrown out of the current of human action, and as a dead language remain relatively unchanged, subject chiefly to the decay of time. But so long as language is used, it must be modified by the exigencies of use, and be impressed by all the changes of the mental life of the nation whose it is.

These changes of language are usually spoken of as its growth. They are allied to growth in this — that they take place, not by forces external to the mind, but through the varying phases of intellectual life, the vitalizing principle of speech. They are the result of a living power acting on its own organs, and shaping them to its modified use. These modifications are also allied to growth in the fact that they are unconscious. The current of thought, in changing, changes its banks. It does not purpose to change under a conscious recognition of its own exigencies, but the exigency itself determines the change, and is brought to light in it. All the forces that act upon character act upon language, and act on language through character. This is true of speech when left to itself within its own national bounds. When violently acted on by a foreign tongue, the changes become more deep and radical, the life of language developing itself under new and arbitrary conditions.

The leading constituents of a language are its vocab-

ulary and its grammar : it is the last that chiefly gives character to and defines it.

The appearance of grammatical laws, of a system of grammatical construction, marks the birth of a language ; any great modification of these, its decay. Only slight and secondary remodellings of this framework of speech are to be looked for in its historical periods. Not till the laws of grammar are settled is there any language, any system and method ; and these established, the instinct of self-preservation secures their careful observance, lest speech again lose its ground, and slip into disorder. Grammar is the emerging of method, of order, and all further change is the slighter movements of completion.

The period of bold changes is half anarchical, and is soon brought to an end by the strongest tendencies which it itself develops.

The changes which longest infest grammar, and most disguise it, are phonetic. Phonetic changes, arising from the coalescence of two words, or of a root and final syllable, are the source of its terminations ; and these, forever on the tongue, are further clipped, till little of their former semblance remains. The reduction of terminations to their smoothest, easiest forms is as inevitable as the process which wears the pebble round.

The changes of words, on the other hand, are great

and constant, accompanying language in all stages. These are the reception of new words, the loss of old words, and a modification in the meaning of words.

It is evident, that in the progress of a nation, and consequent changes of its social life, there must be constant occasion for new words. The vocabulary, therefore, ever enlarges itself, now on this side, now on that, now slowly, now rapidly, according as one or another spirit prevails with the people. Here, from the nature of the case, there can be no limit. But all old words do not retain their ground; some are displaced by better words, some by new words, and others, for an unrendered reason, drop off — the dead leaves of a past season.

An equally serious and constant change is in the meaning of words. There is a tendency by which these become less specific and more general. A word applied to a given object or operation passes beyond this first use to objects or operations closely allied to it, till, creeping from resemblance to resemblance, it becomes a general instead of a specific term, or performs a dozen distinct offices. Words, like kings, overpass their prerogatives. This is especially true in popular speech. Philosophy struggles to counteract this tendency, and bring back words to a more precise office. This accuracy of thought gives to its language a technical char-



acter. The mediums of popular and philosophical thought separate themselves more and more, owing to these tendencies, on the one hand, to lose the specific in the general, and, on the other, to restore the specific, under more accurate conceptions, with new definitions.

Closely allied to this enlargement of words is that tendency by which language becomes less figurative and more literal. The name of one object applied to a second, on the ground of some connection, at first presents both objects and the bond between them. By repeated use, however, the mind at length as readily associates the term with the second as with the first object, and the fact and ground of the transfer are overlooked. The word has ceased to be a trope. Poetry is thus forever losing her language, and is forced to restore her imagery by a new and bold application of terms. She thus shares and greatly intensifies the popular tendency, and makes the poetic use of language strikingly opposed to its philosophic use. It is not strange, then, that the very laws of language relax themselves in poetry, and give it an easier rein than prose. The philosopher and the poet stand at the two extremes in the play of language, while the orator occupies intermediate ground, with the right to move in either direction.

According as one or other of these counter tendencies to more careful analysis and limitation in the use of

words, or to their wider application on the ground of remote and superficial connections, prevails, language becomes clear and vigorous, or loose and nerveless.

Restraint and rule in popular and poetic speech even are the condition of permanent vigor and vividness. All the light that is struck out of language by lawless liberty is sure to lapse into deeper darkness. A flashy use of words becomes, like a spent fashion, least of all impressive. It not unfrequently happens that definiteness is restored to a word by its exclusive use in a later meaning. The last duty performed by it, becoming the more important, draws it wholly away from its first office. There is thus a change without any necessary enlargement or restriction of meaning.

The meaning of words is also constantly modified by changes in that to which they are applied, or in our conception of it. The terms employed in philosophy and religion are an illustration of the latter case, and many of those used in morals of the former. A writer on mental science cannot be perfectly understood till we know from what school of philosophy his language comes. Yet more marked is this in the case of religion. The words of any faith can, in their religious import, be apprehended only by the interpretation of that faith itself. Words applied to persons, to social and moral qualities, will lose and gain rank according to the char-

acter of those who receive them. Though the term of praise or censure may for a little affect the man, he, as the stronger of the two, soon comes to impart to it his own character. The Puritan and the Methodist brought up these appellatives in the dignity of language to the point to which they themselves had ascended in the scale of worth.

The changes to which language is subject are more violent and less homogeneous when it is exposed to foreign influence, and built up as a composite fabric, than when developed chiefly from its own roots, and in completion of its own laws. The ease and boldness, also, with which modifications are made, are much greater in the earlier than in the later history of a language, — while it remains speech than after it has become the vehicle of literature. The laws of language, as its structure grows, tend to greater authority and rigor; any departure from them is much more easily and generally observed when made permanent to the eye in print, than when left to the detection of the ear amid the careless and slipping forms of speech. These changes, also, become more and more destructive of the ends and the integrity of language, and convert its growth into a perpetual transition from product to product, instead of the ripening of a single product. As the framework of a language assumes form, and

approaches completion, this movement must be relatively suspended, or it quickly undoes what has just been accomplished.

Each language possesses its own words, and shapes and arranges them under its own laws. What is the legislative, the law-giving authority? Use. A method, a manner, unconsciously works its way into speech, and, once in possession, assumes as a principle of order the authority already tacitly conceded. The most unimpeachable principles of action often come from silent recognition in all of the necessity of a method, and from the ease and safety which it gives. Custom, the compendious digest of the more or less lucid experiences of men, is a great source of law. That custom which rules in language is termed *use*.

Use is not all use, but good use; and good use is present, national, reputable use. Different classes of men have not equal influence over language, and, therefore, not equal authority in it. It is much more immediately and constantly the instrument of some than of others. One, with a few hundred vocables, employs it merely as a means of geering the wheels of business and physical life; another, with many thousand words in all departments of thought, makes it the field of his constant movements, the receptacle of his labors, and, while enriched by it, in turn enriches it with oratory, poetry,

or philosophy. In the hands of the literary class does language chiefly show its power. It is they that enlarge and shape it into the efficient and flexible instrument of the mind. It is preëminently their product, and accumulates for them its wealth. In turn, therefore, it renders itself into their hand, and from them receives its laws.

But language is a medium, as well as an instrument. It goes between man and man, between the one and the many; and that speech is national which is the medium of a nation's thought. Hence the literary man controls the nation's tongue, not by a private, but by a public, use of it. When, as a writer and speaker, he puts himself in communion with men, in giving law to their thought, he gives law, also, to the nation's language. Those who most broadly and frequently make language the means of arousing the popular, the national, thought and feeling, chiefly control it. In this regard, the poet and orator have more influence than the philosopher. Use, then, is the use of reputable writers and speakers; and this is general use. There may be many departures from it; but these, arising from a class or section, will no one of them have the currency which belongs to good, to national, use. It is the reputation of authors which gives them authority, and therefore the most reputable use will become national use.

But, as already seen, language is not stationary, and use must belong to the time which it rules. It thus has the three characteristics of present, national, and reputable.

The qualities of style immediately dependent on obedience to use are purity and propriety. The first is the use of the words and forms only of the language employed; the second, the employment of these in the meaning belonging to them.

The question arises, Why this obedience? In the first place, it is the indispensable condition of the existence of a literature. There must be permanence and stability in a language to make it the depository of the literary wealth of successive generations. In a cultivated period and race, language must not only be the intelligible medium of thought between those of a single generation, but between successive generations. It must have universality in time as well as space. Indeed, the coveted honor of literature is durability. Without this, the ephemeral success of wide circulation is of little moment. The fulness, richness, and usefulness of a literature will depend on the number of those who have access to it, the sympathy by which it lives among the masses in successive periods, and becomes the common receptacle and source of wide-spread influence. But this growth and availability of literature can only be found

in a language slow to change, conservative of its laws and character. Progress becomes less destructive, more restrained and careful, averse to the new as new, and watchful of the old. Cultivated periods, under the instinct of self-preservation, that their labors may not be cast aside in a single generation as already antique, have attached increasing importance to obedience, and have armed criticism with a severe authority.

There is, indeed, through this movement, some loss of flexibility and vital force in language; but this is more than compensated by its stability, the fidelity with which it retains what is committed to it, the grand growing power with which it discourses to the successive generations of men.

Such a language, like the classic tongues, may quickly give way before the violence of a disorganized society, yet even then reserve for itself an enviable life in the retreats of learning. The very crystallization of a language, which makes it clear and symmetrical, may make it fragile under the blows of violence. Nomadic speech preserves its flexibility, as the tribe preserves its freedom of emigration, by possessing nothing.

Since, therefore, obedience is the condition of literature, and literature is the consummation of all literary labor, it is neither unexpected nor unreasonable that it should be implicitly exacted.

As it is the inevitable tendency of language, in the progress of cultivation, to become relatively stationary and feeble in its organic powers, all the more care is requisite in the reception of foreign words and forms. These are sure to remain, from the advanced point at which they have been received, more alien, more anomalous, less incorporated into the language, than its earlier acquisitions, and fitted therefore only to mar its symmetry, to perplex its orthography and orthoepy, and make it a rough mosaic of joined but uncompact parts. The symmetry and harmony, and therefore the ease and grace, of speech must, the moment its leading features are defined, depend on the care with which foreign tendencies and elements are excluded, and native and analogous words and constructions maintained. The causes by which the one result or the other is reached are indeed, for the most part, beyond the control of individuals, and undesigned in their effects; yet purity, and the effort by which it is sustained in a language, are the organic force of symmetry and order showing itself against lawless and ceaseless change. This tendency, therefore, should be accepted and cherished. Criticism should aid and make way for the vital force of speech, even if it may do no more than relieve it from petty foreign interference, which, like the stings of an insect, irritate and exhaust it.



Not only do the permanence and symmetry of language call for obedience, but also its highest significance. A foreign word is stripped of its kindred. It does not by derivation and relationship stand in connection with a family of words by which it is expounded, and which, in turn, it helps expound. Bereft of explanatory and pleasing associations, it remains an alien, doing but coldly and mechanically the task laid on it. Words oftentimes do not suffer transplanting without a sad loss of grace and power. The awkward pronunciation which overtakes them, by which they lose citizenship at home without gaining it abroad, marks this devastating tendency. The ready intelligibility and expressive power of any tongue will depend chiefly on the relations of its words one to another, and the mutual support they render. A word formed from an old root receives light from all its cognates, and is closely knit to the language of which it is the offspring. A self-developed and homogeneous language can be mastered on its own ground, its growth having been the consecutive and logical expansion of its own powers. A composite speech, on the other hand, is perpetually referring us to foreign sources, and is full of results due, not to the interior progress and necessities of national thought, but to historical and extraneous forces. Its growth is more political, and less strictly linguistic. Language thus

loses that transparency which it possesses when permeated through and through by a few leading ideas and native roots. Permanence, symmetry, and intelligibility, therefore, call for purity in speech, and give authority, in all literary and reflecting periods, to the law of use.

But if this law is established, the composition of the individual will suffer much from its violation. Critical taste will be offended, an appearance of effort and affectation belong to the style, the obscurity of a novel phrase burden the thought, and that weariness overtake the reader which is the sure result of any unusual strain on words. The most simple style is the most permanently effective, and simplicity is no more immediately and obviously dependent on any one quality than on purity. To master a language and use it powerfully is a much greater achievement than to eke out expression with scraps and phrases borrowed from all tongues. The modest strength of the one method is placed by a long remove above the anxious pedantry of the other. No style can deserve the high praise of simplicity which is not pure, and no production will be likely to enrich a permanent literature which has not a good degree of this quality.

Use is established for the most part unconsciously. Some would push the statement farther, and put the

growth of language wholly beyond the critical efforts of those who employ it. It is, indeed, only in the later and more reflective periods, that literary effort will, of set purpose, curb wayward tendencies, and shape its instrument to its ends. The two forces which control the growth of language are the exigencies of expression and the harmony of sounds. We must remember that speech strives to communicate, to make thought intelligible. It does not, therefore, invent new methods, which as new would be unknown, and fail to serve its purpose, but it struggles to enlarge the old, and adapt them to its ends. Certain words are familiar, certain methods common: a new application of these, therefore, will not be unintelligible, but flash the thought at once upon the mind. The very object of expression, the very exigency of intercourse, will tend to maintain and enlarge the old as the only clear means of communication. But the compounds and grammatical combinations which thus arise, and in the outset explain themselves, will soon begin to be acted on by phonetic changes, which clip, and compact, and smooth the flow of sound. In this manner, the original intelligibility of the combination may be lost; but it has now by custom acquired the desired power of expression, and no longer needs the interpretation of its roots. Thus, even when speech builds up its fabric in a significant way, its forms

ultimately assume an arbitrary appearance through the elisions they have suffered — through the inevitable modifications which abbreviate sounds and shape them to the mouth and ear.

Of this the past tense in *ed* is a convenient illustration. This termination is by Müller referred to the auxiliary *did*. I love *did*, I loved.

Though it is evident, that use founded on the exigency of expression, of communication, must tend to the familiar, the self-explanatory method, and that any word or form that should obtain a majority vote would thereby be pressed on the universal acceptance, yet it is also evident, that on many points there might arise, and for a time at least remain, a divided use. This shows itself more in words than in grammatical forms. These spring up so early, and run so long a career, that at some point the balance is lost, and the weight of custom passes over to the one or the other method. Words, on the other hand, changing constantly, remain for a time, in minor points, as spelling, and especially pronunciation, unsettled.

While use, then, is absolute, and to be set aside at one's peril, with or without reason, where is the authority in the case of divided use? It is evident that supreme authority is lost; and we have two or more methods open to choice. In any one of them we are

right; in none of them are we absolutely right, to the exclusion of the others. It does not follow from this that there is no ground of choice between different forms established by use, — that we are always and only to inquire after the decision of the majority, and if this can be determined, blindly adhere to it. We have our idea of symmetry and perfection in language; and of ease, power, and precision in the performance of its offices. These considerations often do not leave it a matter of indifference what forms shall be accepted. Criticism, a conscious exercise of judgment, may, and does, come in to aid in settling fluctuating use. It is certainly irrational to forbid this exercise of reason, and contrary to facts to assert that it has no power. A great lexicographer, like Webster, can do much to control divided use; and every writer, who for a reason adopts a given form, just as much aids in establishing its authority as does he who unconsciously and carelessly employs it. The question is not whether scholars have consciously or unconsciously accepted a spelling or pronunciation. It is equally established in the one case as in the other. Men can be influenced by reasons, by example and instruction, as readily in this as in any other form of action. Criticism of language, therefore, is neither absurd nor impotent; vacillating use may obviously be much affected by it, and in rare cases we have

no doubt that a well-established use might be first divided, and at length overthrown by it. We need, however, always to bear in mind that use is the law, and that he who rejects any one of its commands takes the risk of a reformer. A nation is to be persuaded at the peril of his own personal condemnation. It is not our idea of language that all its movements are, like the currents of the wind, only to be observed, and never, in the least degree, to be controlled. Much less do we suppose, that it is open to every humor of the critic, or wholly pliant in the hands of literary men. The unconscious life and necessities of the national heart and intellect shape it; but this heart and intellect can themselves be affected, and words, like ink punctured from a pen-point, be fastened in the very tissue of a living organism.

Canons of criticism have been often given, which are fitted, and ought, to exercise an influence on literary men in the decision of all open questions of use. We give the most important of them.

The analogy of a language should be followed.

It is only by order, rule, that language becomes language. To extend this order as far as practicable is only to suffer the organic power of speech to show and complete itself. Want of analogy is so far want of obedience—is disorder. Strenuously to sustain single anom-

alous forms and words here and there, is to insist that use shall perpetually contradict itself. Certainly, use is more honored by making complete the principle which it has established than by maintaining, in the very teeth of principle, an exception which rests on no reason. This is to refuse to carry out the most authoritative and just tendencies of a language, — is to deprive it of symmetry, and make it a medley of exceptions and undeveloped principles. Undistinguishing obedience like this is irrational, and, when use is already divided, futile.

These considerations are especially applicable to orthography, since the spelling of a word is not decided by general use, but by the use of the press. The eye marks the spelling; hence printed matter alone determines questions of this kind. Nor is it the author so much as the publisher that decides on the orthography. The manuscript is not followed, but some standard which the publishing house has adopted, and to which all questions are referred. The lexicographer decides for the printer, and the printer decides for the public. If this statement does not cover all the facts, it covers many of them, and, in view of it, it is absurd to say that a language cannot be even greatly affected by direct, designed effort. Spelling in the Elizabethan age was much at random, and has been defined and

settled largely through the influence of the dictionary. An early lexicographer must exert a great influence on orthography, and every dictionary which obtains a large circulation carries with it its spelling.

Many questions of orthography have been warmly discussed; the one side striving to maintain irregular and wavering use, the other, to carry it over to a uniform principle. Among these disputed points have been the substitution of *er* for *re* in the few words which still retain the latter syllable; doubling a final consonant — in such words as *fulfill* — when preceded by a vowel, and taking the accent; retaining the single consonant in the final unaccented syllable of the root when receiving a termination, as in *traveler*.

The rule of analogy requires that the English pronunciation of a word, incorporated from abroad into the language, should be preferred.

A second canon is this: In cases of divided use the etymological relations of a word should govern its form.

A word, itself a derivative, is often a root of other forms. It is desirable, therefore, that it should stand in harmonious relation both with its own root and the words which spring from it. "Defense," therefore, is preferable orthography to "defence," since it is thus in agreement with its source, *defensio*, and its derivative, *defensive*.



It would be foolish to strive to correct all the mistakes of etymology which have become incorporated into the language. A word, like a tree long planted and growing, cannot be lightly plucked up for every fault in its form. *Algebra* serves as good a turn as if it contained no solecism. Yet it does not follow that we should be heedless of all errors of etymology, that our words should blunder into their forms, and be united by no principle of order to their cognates. The intelligibility of a language, and ease of acquisition, require that its growth should find and follow a law.

The words *decompound* and *unloose* give an instance of faulty etymology, since the prefix is not suffered to have its ordinary force; but the root retains, in spite of it, its original meaning.

A third canon is, Distinct words should, as far as possible, be kept distinct in form and meaning. .

Thus *ought* and *ought* are separated by using the first exclusively as a noun, the second as a verb. *Gauntlet*, a glove, and *gantlet*, a form of punishment, should be separated by a diverse orthography. It is obvious that perspicuity of speech will be aided by this rule. When the same word has distinct offices as a verb and noun, etymology forbids a change of form. The English has striven in some degree, though with no uniformity, to mark this distinction by accent, or by a

change in the sound of a letter. Thus we have in the word *use* different sounds employed to separate the noun and verb; in *convict, conduct, present, produce*, different accent. In some words, the more questionable method of overlooking analogy and derivation has been employed, and we have *advise* and *advice*; *practise, practice*. The weaker mark of pronunciation, leaving a clear etymology, seems the appropriate distinction.

We add a fourth canon more immediately applicable to grammar.

When a divided use is struggling to reject an anomalous grammatical construction, not to be referred by analysis to any principle of syntax, such forms should be abandoned.

Of this class are these in the auxiliary "had": *I had rather go; I had better go; I had as lief go as not*. In each of these cases *would* is the auxiliary which the forms of grammar require. The obscure combinations of verbs and participles are already so many in English, and occasion so much perplexity in the grammar, and opacity in the expression, as to render every movement which tends to their reduction desirable. In the expression, *I ought to have done*, the exigencies of grammar override those of the thought, and in the statement of a most simple idea a moral impossibility is involved. *The house was being built*, is also a conventional ex-

pression defined by custom, not by the intrinsic force of the words. The house being built, is equivalent to the house being finished; adding, therefore, the past tense of the neuter verb simply carries the assertion into past time; and the expression, *The house was being built*, should mean the house was finished. In the expression, *It looks as if he was a bad man*, we have a past tense, but not past time.

The same want of grammatical construction is sometimes found in the pronoun. "*Whom* do men say that I am?" "Satan, than *whom* none higher sat." In each of these examples a substitution of *who* removes the anomaly without marring the thought, and should therefore be preferred.

A fifth canon pertains to the meaning of words.

Certain phrases gain a conventional force aside from their ordinary meaning, or involve a contradictory idea. These should be discarded.

Most of them are ephemeral forms current in conversation, more rarely finding their way into print, like the following: *To play out, to use up, the game's up, first best, dance attendance*.

It is strange how much conversation can be made to flow in a few favorite phrases like these. In their origin giving to speech a racy character, they often, in the end,

rob it of all freshness and value, and make it a dexterous transfer of pert phrases, the speaker losing sight of the barrenness of his thought in the smartness of the expression. As many of these forms as will die should be suffered to die. Their first and only merit lay in their novelty, and living on they fill speech with lazy, slouching, slang phrases, irksome in conversation, and wholly intolerable in composition. Some circumstances seem especially favorable to generate and multiply these insects of speech, which buzz in the ear, occupying the attention without instructing the mind, and, with their affected smartness, put sober thought sadly out of countenance. Among students in colleges quite a share of language is sometimes made up of a local phraseology utterly worthless, a jargon barbarous to every one but themselves, and unworthy of the ingenuity with which it is enlarged and employed. One may be a great proficient in the phrases which accumulate in any clique, class, or department, a few of which escape and fly at large, and not only be very ignorant of English, but, for that very reason, the more ignorant of it, and unable to wield it.

Of those expressions which give a meaning contradictory, the *three first* may be given as an illustration. The *first three* is the preferable form. Not every sol-

ecism, however, is inadmissible. A *two inch* plank, a *ten foot* pole, are current, and almost inevitable, forms of speech.

The violations of purity are three: barbarism, sol-ecism, and impropriety.

## CHAPTER VII.

## BARBARISM.

A BARBARISM is the use of a word which does not belong to the language: it may be a foreign term, a provincialism or a vulgarism, an obsolete word, or an unrecognized compound. Of these forms of barbarism the first is the most objectionable. It can only be justified by necessity. It does not, indeed, behoove a composite speech, like the English, to despise foreign aid; yet to be ever ready to receive and rely on it implies great weakness in native resources, and tends to perpetuate it. Because the language has drawn without restraint from foreign sources, it does not follow that it may continue thus to draw. Early additions have become thoroughly incorporated, while later additions, suffering little change, lie as it were on the surface, still alien to the tongue. The pedantry and obscurity of foreign words should not be incurred without an urgent reason. An invention, a manufacture, introduced from abroad, may appropriately bring with it its name. Our own language should remain the adequate medium of

native thought, and be able with sufficient honor to christen its own products, material and immaterial. While our goods are so poor as to need the falsehood of a foreign label, and our thoughts so flashy as to require the affectation of a foreign phrase, this form of imitation must prevail; but genuine excellency will make the most of itself, and be contented with itself.

The second kind of barbarism arises from giving currency to words restricted to a province or a class. Any language spoken over a wide territory will have a partially divided use, forms gaining currency in one province which are not recognized in others. Thus there arise provincialisms, or words of local currency. These are to be distinguished from vulgarisms, which are not dependent on place, but are words and expressions sustained by the careless and uncultivated against the decision of literary use. The first are, in a measure, foreign to the language; the last are the scum of expression, thrown off by it, or at least expelled from the careful forms of composition into conversation, always more hasty and heedless.

To accept a vulgarism is to rescind a verdict already rendered, and this is not to be done without most pressing reason. Dialects, on the other hand, in the earlier stages of a language, must act strongly upon it, and will always, as roots of the main trunk, maintain more

life than it. The want of what is termed *life*, in a tongue, is seen in its immobility, its formal and critical correctness, in the hesitancy and caution with which it either adds to the old or modifies it. The inflexible state into which language sets as it receives the impress of cultivation, straitens its vital power, and suspends its growth. The force which most counteracts this tendency is that of dialects. A less critical, more sporadic, and free movement takes place in the shire, the province, the remote colony, or the distinct kingdom; and words and forms obtaining ground and strength here, may ultimately force a change on the parent speech. The independent development of distinct nations, like those of the United States and England, using the same language, while it may be the occasion of many vulgarisms, will yet render the parent speech more vital than if it were not subject to the strain of such diverse character and circumstances. The joints of speech, when employed in so many and so widely different and unclassical duties, cannot ossify.

Provincial and dialectic use, therefore, will not of necessity, and always, give way to parent use, but will maintain its ground, renew the stock, and nurse the life from which it sprung.

We need not mention the very many words furnished by America as names of new plants, animals, products,



and institutions. Aside from these, many good words have arisen, deserving adoption. We give, as examples, *boatable, availability, bread-stuff, caucus, bogus, chore, clutter, coddling, raft, rafting, mass, mailable, lyceum, location, lobby, salt-lick*. Some of these words are new, others old with a new meaning.

Vulgarisms originate in conversation — are its tropes. Colloquial use is quite distinct from literary use. Conversation requires a dictionary of its own, and good use, even with the educated, maintains but a lenient and wavering authority in this unsettled border territory. The chief medium through which any of these vulgarisms creep into more considerate literary efforts is the newspaper and the stump-speech. Made at home in this open antechamber, they afterward find their way into dignified quarters.

A third form of barbarism is the use of obsolete words. Present use is not opposed to past, but to obsolete use. In the journeyings of speech, many words fall by the way, and, having dropped from the memory of man, have something of the strangeness and obscurity of foreign terms. Many expressions which pass for vulgarisms are but old forms still lingering in obscure quarters. A stable literature greatly retards the movement by which words drop away, or are crowded out by others. The English Bible has been

a safe storehouse to most of the words committed to it. Old words deserve a certain regard, and should not be as closely questioned as new comers.

The fourth barbarism is the use of unrecognized compounds. Here more liberty should be allowed than anywhere else; and all the more in English, since the compounding of words has hitherto been so little employed. Compound words have these advantages over foreign terms: they are self-explanatory, more thoroughly significant, and stand in closer and more symmetrical relations with the language.

A tongue that begins to draw largely from foreign sources finds this so ready a method, as to be rarely forced into the construction of compounds; and thus it becomes more and more composite, more and more composed of distinct and inflexible elements. Its words, like stones in a heap, lie apart, with no coalescence. Thus, often, when we wish an adjective, instead of constructing it from our own noun, we borrow it from the kindred Latin noun, and say *calcareous* soil, instead of *limy* soil.

The use of compounds requires regulation, not severe restriction. Needed euphonious and analogous compounds are not to be rejected. When the place of the compound can be readily supplied with a simple word, it, as cumbersome and superfluous, should evidently find

no acceptance. This is true of many compounds in *self*; of *self-interest*, in place of *interest*; of *self-homicide*, *self-murder*, and *self-slaughter*, in place of *suicide*. Uneuphonic compounds, as *well-mannered*, *well-moralized*, *down-looked*, should not be accepted on any weaker plea than necessity. Though a barbarism cannot be as clearly established at this point as at some others, such words render style harsh and uncouth in a high degree.

The most important consideration, however, in this class of words, is, that their construction shall accord with the analogy of the language. Compounds in *self* frequently violate this rule. The law of composition in this prefix is given by Campbell. "If the word be a substantive, the preposition to be supplied is commonly *of*; if the passive participle, *by*; and if the active participle, no preposition is requisite." Thus we have *self-love*, the love *of* one's self; *self-condemned*, condemned *by* one's self; and *self-consuming*. Under this rule, what shall we do with such words as *self-charity*, *self-importance*, *self-communicative*? The rule is, indeed, somewhat too restricted, as shown in the word *self-consistent*, but draws attention to an important class of errors.

It must be remembered in criticism, that language cannot grow without barbarisms; and the practical

question becomes, At what point shall the greatest liberty be given to its expansion? If it be granted in the line of derivatives and compounds, the language becomes more consistent and self-contained than by any other method of growth.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SOLECISM AND IMPROPRIETY.

A SOLECISM is a violation of the laws of syntax. These laws express the principles by which the words of a language are combined into sentences. There must be some method of marking the dependence of words, one upon another, in the expression of thought, since a given thought is rendered only through a given dependence. This may be done by the arbitrary marks of declension and conjugation, by particles of relation, and by position. A language usually employs all these methods with a preponderance in each given tongue of one or another of them. The later and more composite languages steadily forsake the prefix and termination as marks of syntax, and rely more and more on position. This renders necessary a correspondence between the order of the sentence and the inherent connections of the thought, and may rightly be termed the logical method. First comes the nominative, the subject of thought; then, the affirmation; and later, the results and incidents of the action or state. If the copula of the

sentence is an active verb, we start with the agent, and descend through the action to its object; if a passive verb, we start with the object, and ascend through the action to the agent. In either case the order and connection are strictly logical.

In proportion as the understanding gained upon the passions of men, it is evident that these inherent connections of thought would more and more control the expression, and as evident that the marks of declension which accompanied the more free and passionate arrangement would become less and less necessary. As composite languages tend also, in the conflict of diverse methods, and through the unyielding form of foreign words, to lose declension, it is not strange that the two influences concurring have so far stripped the languages of modern Europe of the marks of syntax, and so much simplified their rules. The agreement of the adjective with the noun in gender, number, and case, is an arbitrary agreement, and nothing is lost to the thought, though something is to the freedom of arrangement when it ceases to be marked.

There are two purposes subserved by the marks of declension and conjugation. A portion of these is purely arbitrary. They indicate no modification of the idea, but denote a grammatical dependence, the same in all cases. Of this sort are those which indicate the

dependence of adjectives on nouns; the agreement of verbs and nouns. Simple position in a more strict arrangement is able fully to meet the office of these terminations, and to set them aside with the introduction of nothing in their place. Another portion of these marks indicates a relation of a peculiar character, notes an additional circumstance, and, thus standing in an inherent connection with the thought, must, if dispensed with, be replaced by some word performing the same office. Of this sort are the case terminations of the noun. Nouns may stand in a great variety of relation, one to another, and these affixes not only indicate a relation, but its precise character, and thus, aside from their grammatical office, take part in the expression. So, also, the tenses, moods, and voices of the verb define the character of the action; and if, therefore, the verb is stripped of these, the apparatus of expression must elsewhere be enlarged and made more cumbersome. These marks are replaced by prepositions, auxiliary verbs, and more lengthy expressions in significant terms. The most compact and knit expression, therefore, must ever belong to highly inflected languages, since there is here a condensation both of thought and grammatical mechanism into the significant terms of the sentence.

Language, however, is not pure in its methods. Prepositions complete the full case declensions, and a

tongue like the English, well nigh devoid of inflection, still retains a few terminations expressing nothing but grammatical dependence. It is no more difficult to mark by position the dependence of the singular noun on its verb than the plural; yet the one is aided in the present tense by a full conjugation, while the other retains a single form in all the persons.

|                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| <i>I love,</i>      | <i>We love,</i>        |
| <i>Thou lovest,</i> | <i>Ye or you love,</i> |
| <i>He loves.</i>    | <i>They love.</i>      |

There may be as many solecisms as principles of syntax. It is our purpose to mark only a few of these, into which even good speakers and writers sometimes fall. The fundamental link of the sentence is the verb. This not only contains the leading affirmation of the sentence, and attaches it to the subject, but becomes a chief centre of qualifying words and dependent clauses. While many of the incidents and forms of action are expressed by adverbs, many are also incorporated in the verb itself. Tenses, moods, and voices compress into the verb the time and relations of the action, till this in every language becomes by far the most pregnant part of speech. In the use of the verb, therefore, even when the construction is as simple as that of English, solecisms frequently appear. Transitive are confounded



with similar intransitive verbs — *set* with *sit*, *lay* with *lie*. “The coat *sets* well.” “The bird is *setting*.” “I *sat* myself down to write.” “This principle *underlays* the subject.” These are common instances of this confusion.

So also frequently verbs are employed in a transitive or intransitive use which does not strictly belong to them. “The guilty children of dust might come together and *transact* respecting life and blessing.”

The past tense and perfect participles are, when different, often used one for the other. The little conjugation that we retain we seem very liable to forget, and to be constantly willing to substitute the regular forms in *ed* for the older and stronger ones. *Begun* is so often used in the past tense for *began*, as to be now nearly ready, by a tendency seen in other verbs, to claim the usurped place. Conversation is even troubled to keep distinct forms so separate, as *did* and *done*.

The rule is frequently forgotten, that conjunctions unite in the same construction only like forms of the verb. In the passage, “If thou *bring* thy gift to the altar, and there *rememberest* that thy brother hath aught against thee,” we have an indicative and subjunctive included under the same regimen. Either mood may be used, but the one excludes the other. The subjunctive mood in English has few distinctive forms, and

shares its duties with the indicative. The indicative has gained ground on the subjunctive to such an extent that there remain but few offices which belong exclusively to the latter.

The indicative mood marks time more strongly than any other; the subjunctive and potential constantly vacillate in this respect, and forms associated with the past may express both present and future time, requiring the context for their determination. "If he *chose* he *might* do it," "He *acts* as though he *thought* I *were* a fool," are expressions marking this fluctuation. In consequence of this tendency of the indicative more explicitly to define the assertion in time, or from the idea of customary action which it involves, the subjunctive mood occasionally becomes more appropriate. In the clause, "If he *were* to do it," the vagueness of time is more consistent with the subjunctive than with the indicative mood. Hence has arisen a rule of very general application, that when doubt and futurity are both involved, the subjunctive is the appropriate mood. "Men do not despise a thief if he *steal* to satisfy his soul when he is hungry." If the indicative were here used, it might indicate a habit at war with the sentiment of the assertion.

The English verb is quite full and explicit in marking time; and at this point, therefore, careless composition

is especially liable to inaccuracy. Absolute time is chiefly denoted by the indicative. The present tense has, where the meaning of the verb requires it, two forms denoting respectively customary present action, and an act as now transpiring — he *speaks*, he *is speaking*. Both of these forms of the present tense take a passive, giving the often criticised and somewhat awkward expression, "The house is *being built*," or the older form, "The house is *a building*;" and, "A house *is built*," "Houses *are built*." A general truth having no immediate reference to time, not coming under its limitations, is allied to customary action, and is always stated in the present. Such truths have an omnipresence that renders this their appropriate tense. "Happy *is* that people whose God is the Lord."

In the past tense the English verb expresses three relations of time under two forms: an action transpiring at a definite past time, an action performed at a definite past time, and a customary past action. The last two offices are discharged by the same form. The imperfect is the definite historical tense, and except when marking a customary action, — a fact more frequently indicated by additional words in the context, — it can be met by the inquiry, When? "He *spoke*," "He *was speaking*," both demand for their explanation a definite time, attaching the assertion in the thought to a given moment. The

same is true of a customary past action, except that the time is lengthened from a point into a period. "Houses *were built* of wood;" that is, during a certain past period.

The perfect tense leaves the assertion in the whole of the past, without attaching it to any one moment; or carries it through the whole of the past, denying it of every part of it. "I *have accomplished* it." "No man *has ever accomplished* it," present the two forms. The perfect is said to have reference to the present. This it does only by implying that the time included comes down to the present moment, not by implying that the act asserted has just taken place. "I *have*" — at any past time whatsoever down to the very latest instant — "*spoken*." If, therefore, the assertion lies in anything less than indefinite past time, beginning at the present moment, the perfect tense cannot be used. We cannot say, "Rome *has arisen*," since the assertion is not applicable to the period which has intervened since its decline. We can say, "Babylon, Greece, and Rome *have arisen and fallen*," since individual states are here taken to represent a movement which has continued to the present moment. The essential point of the perfect tense is, that the assertion does not pause till it has reached the present. The time may be restricted by the nature of the case, or explicitly

by words, in its stretch backward, but it must reach downward to the point now occupied.

The pluperfect and future perfect, unlike most of the tenses of the indicative, express relative time, and always imply a primary statement, of which they are the complement or correlative. The auxiliaries *have* and *had* mark the priority of the action to some specified or implied time — a time usually involved in another leading verb. In this respect the pluperfect and future perfect are like the tenses of the infinitive; the present infinitive denoting a time the same with, or subsequent to, that of the verb on which it depends; the perfect infinitive, a time prior to that of the principal assertion. To the last rule there is an exception in the clause, "He ought *to have done* it." A grammatical necessity here gives rise to an expression impossible in the idea it literally conveys, and, by the violation of a general rule, the language gains the power of perspicuous expression in a single case. *Ought*, having the same form in the present and past, the time-mark which belonged to the indicative is transferred to the infinitive, and a solecism accepted in place of obscurity. The law of-means yields to the exigency of the end. In these tenses, where the auxiliary is intended accurately to define the relative time, solecisms frequently arise by their employment in a more general use.

While *may*, *can*, and *must*,<sup>o</sup> *might*, *could*, *would*, and *should* are not confined to present and past time, respectively, — the last series, almost as frequently as the first, referring to immediate action, — in correlative clauses they preserve this distinction. *Were* correlates with *would*: "If he *were* there he *would* do it." *Is* correlates with *may*: "If he *is* there he *may* do it." *Might*, *could*, *would*, and *should* correlate with each other; as also *may*, *can*, *must*, and *will*: "If this *can* be done he *may* be here," or "he *must* be here," or "he *will* be here."

*Has* correlates with *may*, *can*, and *must*; *had*, with *could*, *would*, and *should*: —

"If the house *has* been built, it *may* be occupied."

"If the house *had* been built, it *might* be occupied."

In this last expression we see that the pluperfect tense does not necessarily imply priority to a past action, but either to past or present time.

Subjoined are clauses containing some of the more frequent solecisms of tense: —

"He *has given* me all that I required for my purpose." "They *continue* with me three days." "It was a truth which he was careful to enforce, that the civil rights of men *were* equal." "It *is* difficult to say what the world *would have been* if Christ had not come."

"If the work should be finished as proposed, he *will* be greatly pleased with it." "He that *was* dead sat up and began to speak." "If he is there he *might* do it." "Meeting with a common beggar upon the road, as he went to relieve him, he found his pocket *was* picked." "What shall we do that we *might* work the works of God?" "It may well seem as if other influences than such as are now in operation *would* require to be put forth before the expected good can be realized."

"It was killed on the ice in the weakest part of the lake (Champlain), on the 23d of February, thirteen days after the surface *was* entirely frozen, except the usual small creeks, and a month or two after the ice *closed* at all points north of the place where the seal was found."

A peculiar distinction in the use of tenses is spoken of by Webster. "When we use the present tense, it implies uncertainty of the fact, and when we use the preterit, it implies a negation of its existence. Thus a person, at night, would say to his friend, If it *rains* you *shall* not go, being uncertain at the time whether it did or did not rain; but if, on looking out, he perceived it did not rain, he would then say, If it *rained* you *should* not go, intimating that it did not rain." The explanation of this use seems to lie, in part at

least, in the law of correlation pointed out. "You *shall* not go," necessarily expresses the one conclusion, and "You *should* not go," the other ; but these must correlate respectively with the present and past tenses.

There is an occasional misapprehension of what constitutes a verb, leading to a false passive. Campbell, after a careful discussion of the passive voice, recognizes as correct the syntax of the sentence, "The rock *was split* upon by the vessel." Verbs are most appropriately divided into transitive and intransitive, since this division rests on a grammatical distinction, — their power of government, — and not on the meaning of words. Most of those verbs called *neuter* are not neuter, and it is a question of no grammatical import whether they are neuter or not. Grammatical distinctions should rest exclusively on grammatical grounds. All transitive verbs can take a real passive ; intransitive verbs, when assuming a passive form, rob it of its force, as in the words, "He *is gone*." There is a large class of verbs in English compounded with a preposition ; and we require a rule to distinguish them from those cases which arise from the accidental union in position of a verb and preposition. Why have we compounds in the clauses, "He *keeps up* the establishment," "He *entered on* his duties," "They *fell out* by the way," "The acid *acts upon* the metal ;" and not in the clauses, "He



*kept up the hill,* "He *entered* on horseback," "He *fell* out of the window," "I *act* upon this principle"? Evidently because the words in the one series coalesce in a new meaning: "He *kept up*," that is, he maintained the establishment; "He *entered on*," that is, he commenced his duties; while in the other series, both verb and preposition retain simply their original power. Only where we have a true compound, and that compound an active verb, can we rightly construct a passive. In the expression, "The ship *split upon* the rock," there is no proper union of the verb and particle, and therefore the form *was split upon* is not legitimate. Still worse is the passive, justified by the same author, in the sentence, "They *were fallen out with* by her." In this case, the preposition *with* follows after, but is not compounded with, the verb.

When the active verb governs two objects, either of them may become the subject of the passive, and we have two forms of the same idea. "My father *allows me* a horse," becomes, in the passive, either, "*I am allowed* a horse by my father," or, "A horse *'is allowed me* by my father."

As a single further illustration of solecisms, numerous in the other parts of speech as well as in the verb, we instance a use of the conjunctions *either, neither*, when more than two suppositions are made. "He can

*neither* remain here, *nor* return to his friends, *nor* proceed to advantage." The termination *er*, as in the comparative of adjectives, has frequently, in English, a dual force, which prevents the use of several particles, when more than two objects or ideas are concerned. *Either*, *neither*, *other*, *another*, *whether*, *former*, *latter*, are words of this character.

The syntax of the English, though usually thought to be simple, yet requires for its complete knowledge and observance very considerable attention. Aside from the fixed rules, the language has developed a preference for certain forms, which, if not always imperative, yet mark a pure and elegant handling of the national speech. It belongs to grammarians to lay down the laws of construction, and point out the several solecisms which arise from their violation. The rhetorician has only occasion to mark the general character of offences against purity, and the value of this quality of style.

The third violation of the laws of language is an impropriety. It is the employment of words in a meaning not given them by use.

A barbarism is an offence against etymology; a solecism, an offence against syntax; and an impropriety, an offence against lexicography. Purity is the employment of words which belong to a language in the

construction and meaning assigned them by that language.

There are two kinds of improprieties — those of words and those of phrases. The impropriety in the use of words varies from a slight departure from the most appropriate application of a term to its entire perversion. Synonymous words are especially liable to a careless use, which overlooks their precise power. The beauty and accuracy of expression must depend very much on the care with which the entire force of language is preserved—the precision and skill with which it is employed. The fulness and finish of the picture depend on the pliability of the colors, and the delicacy of the touch; the fulness and finish of an expression depend on the clear outline of the thought, and the exactness with which the language is fitted to it. The loose style is ever full of now bolder, now slighter improprieties. The nicer shades of meaning are lost sight of, and a rabble of words are all ready to run on any service. Words allied in etymology are often confounded, as *tragic*, *tragical*; *obnoxious*, *noxious*; *transcendent*, *transcendental*; *admit* and *admit of*. There is no limit to the variety and number of improprieties which may arise in the use of words.

Nouns with two plurals have frequently assigned them a distinct meaning for each form; as, *genii*,

*geniuses; brothers, brethren; indexes, indices.* We subjoin a few improprieties in words:—

“No man has a type of face so clearly national as the American. He is *acknowledged* by it all over the continent.”

“*Immediately* these schemes failed they were prepared to throw the nation overboard.”

“The relation still *consisted* with the preservation of their religious privileges.”

“Many of the English *admitted of* no such interpretation.”

Impropriety of phrases is of more rare occurrence, and tends to confine itself to a few expressions. In the sentence, “He of all *others* ought not to do it,” the words convey a meaning, by the use of the language, not intended. He of all *others*, takes the place of the kindred form, He of all *persons*, and is made to perform an office which use has assigned the latter words. This class of errors is rightly termed an impropriety of phrases, since one form is put for another with no violation of grammar, but with an inappropriate meaning.

Purity is chiefly valuable as a quality of style through its connection with perspicuity and elegance. Though not capable alone of compassing these higher qualities, it is nevertheless essential to them. Language assumes form and law for the ease and clearness of expression;

and ease and clearness demand, in turn, the maintenance of law. Purity, though a somewhat negative quality, is a condition for high, positive, and permanent results. Impurities do not always arise from the same cause, nor are they always equally injurious.

The introduction of new words frequently springs from pedantry, or from the love of novelty. The style is made one of oddities and conceits, that it may win an attention which the thought is not able to secure. Many barbarisms and some improprieties reveal the wriggling effort of a writer who aims at impression rather than at truth, and who rests his reputation on the manner rather than on the matter.

This method is especially unfavorable to the orator, as it weakens the fervor of address, and casts suspicion on its sincerity. A conceited style is even more at war with energy than with perspicuity, constantly breaking up and turning aside the current of thought with some strange, or strangely applied, word. Composition which aims at amusement may, like a masquerade, proceed with odd and fantastic show.

Solecisms most frequently arise from ignorance and carelessness. They, therefore, especially offend against elegance. In labored composition, where time is given both to the writer and reader, these become grave offences, marring the beauty of all polished effort. Po-

etry strives to secure a finish and flow of style which places the means in harmony with the end. In oratory, especially in extemporaneous effort, on the other hand, solecisms are overlooked, and readily referred to the haste, the impatient earnestness, of the speaker. A little carelessness in the means is pardoned in one thoroughly occupied with the end.

Solecisms, however, often mark a loose, raveling style, which needs to find correction in more compact and restricted sentences, in well-knit and firm assertions, and clearly defined dependences. The beginning of a long, lazy sentence is forgotten, and hence its grammatical demands overlooked. A promised correlative is not given, and the assertion closes wide of its commencement. Extemporaneous effort is especially liable to be tangled in the meshes of a complex sentence, and at last to cast them aside still unelucidated. Solecisms which arise from a weak coherence of the parts of a sentence ought especially to be guarded against, as indicating indolent thought, and tending to inadequate and obscure expression.

A sentence is the first complete, organic product of thinking, and, in its precision and strength, reveals the vigor of the process under which it has arisen. A completeness of grammatical relations marks the sentence. It is a full circle of dependences. A few conjunctions

imply a previous assertion, and a few pronouns seek their antecedents outside its limits; aside from this, every relation must be finished within the complete sentence.

A large class of improprieties arise from careless, vague thinking, — a use of words as empty, slipping signs, with no constant reference of them to well-defined ideas, which they are employed to denote. This class of offences, therefore, greatly interferes with perspicuity, especially in all discussions which require accurate and severe statements. If the concepts — the bundle of notions which lie back of the words, and which they purport to represent — are not the same for all minds, or for the same mind at different moments, it is evident that the assertions made by means of these words can cover no common ground of thought, and can be safely linked in no chain of reasoning. It is not more necessary that the letters of algebra remain, during the reduction of an equation, true to the representative duty at the outset assigned them, than that words adhere firmly to the restricted ideas with which they are charged. Language is only a precise and safe medium of thought as each word receives and always discharges definite and recognized offices. Otherwise used, it becomes the means of constant deception, misapprehension, and mistake. The person who carelessly employs it is often,

most of all, deceived by it. Many controversies end in each party assigning to his adversary a discarded idea, which neither will now accept as having been his own; in both parties claiming a position, at length, recognized as right.

Use is only too vague in determining the meaning of words; if we depart still farther from precision, it must be greatly at the expense of clearness.



# BOOK III.

## CHAPTER I.

### STYLE.

IT remains to speak of the methods of composition — of style. Style is the peculiar mode of expression which belongs to an author. This, in some of its leading features, is often similar in the writers of a period or of a nation. Style is dependent both on internal and external conditions. It receives its peculiar form chiefly from the mental movements of which it is the expression. The thought and language are realized together, and the same tendencies that determine the one must in this very act definitely fasten the other. Language is often spoken of as the garment of the thought. The figure implies by far too distinct and independent an existence in the thought. This, like the life of a plant, is conditioned by and to the form in which it abides; and though this form may be greatly modified by the external forces to which it is subject, yet this modification reacts strongly on the life in the one case, on the

thought in the other. The mind, with a given mastery of language, with a certain fulness and force of vocabulary, a certain ease and accuracy of composition, — the complex result of habit and education, — sets itself to the task of reaching and expressing its thoughts.

Under these defined external conditions the mind realizes a product, shaped by its own laws and tendencies of action. The force from within has been modified by the means at its disposal ; and in the result, both interior and exterior causes, both original power and educational advantages, blend and reveal themselves.

There is no such thing as an absolutely good style. Composition is a means, and, like all means, must be governed by the end. With each variation in the end, therefore, style, or method, must be modified. In reaching the same end, also, minor varieties of method are not only admissible, but desirable, as expressing the varieties of character, and making each product more individual and personal. That which is peculiar without being faulty imparts freshness and variety, and adds to the scope of literature.

It is, therefore, only in certain general characteristics that all good styles agree, and not in the details by which specific ends and adaptations are reached. Even the leading qualities of good style will stand in different relations to each other, and exist in different degrees,

according to the particular object to be secured. There is no uniform preponderance of one over another, or balance of one with another, fitted for all places and occasions. A great variety of adjectives may be applied to style, as *terse*, *vehement*, *copious*, *verbose*, which express different degrees of praise or of censure, according to the specific object in the light of which the effort is to be judged. What is succinct for one audience is copious for another and verbose for a third. No absolute standard is to be set up; but that we may preserve the force of Nature, something of her freedom is to be allowed. A fixed and staid perfection is one of the least perfect of results. The contemptuous criticism of pedantic and formal art marks a decay of power.

The primary qualities of style are three: perspicuity, elegance, and energy. They make answer in composition to the three questions, What is it? What its propriety? What its force? Through perspicuity we realize a definite intellectual product; through elegance we secure in form its highest adaptation to the end; and through energy its highest adaptation in force.

Of these three, the fundamental quality is perspicuity: without it, a production can neither be elegant nor energetic. We cannot have elegant form till we have form, nor forcible sentiment till we have sentiment. It is the light which perspicuity sheds through the intel-

lectual product which reveals its elegance and energy. Thought, that it may have the second and the third quality, must have the first. Without this, it yet lies half hidden amid things unshaped, and can neither furnish the form of beauty nor the substance of strength.

These leading qualities of style stand intimately connected with the three divisions of mental faculties: understanding, emotions, and will. Perspicuity arises from the most perfect action of the intellect; and perspicuous composition alone can discipline and meet the wants of mind. There is here a double relation; perspicuity stands both as a result of, and a means to, successful mental effort.

Elegance springs from, and expresses, delicacy of feeling. The emotional nature, in its more sensitive and esthetical action, is the source of refined sentiment and of those chosen and elegant forms which appropriately embody it. The imagination, though often employed in the service of pure thought, only paints in warm and glowing colors under the influence of the feelings. Elegance, therefore, as a quality of style, stands most intimately connected with the emotions.

Energy expresses the patience and vigor with which an end is pursued, and these qualities are due to will. Desire, assuming a settled determination, imparts direction and earnestness to the movements of the mind,

and, hence, energy to that language which reveals them. Energy is rooted in will; without it there can be no persistency, no power.

These three qualities stand also connected, respectively, with the three forms of composition. Prose, philosophical prose, having chiefly to do with the connections of facts or the logical relations of thought, above all requires perspicuity in their conception and statement. Accuracy and distinctness are here, as in a working-plan, or an illustrative drawing, the qualities most requisite. Statement is the thing aimed at; and statement is statement no further than it is lucid.

In poetry, on the other hand, pleasure is sought; and it is a condition of high-wrought, delicate enjoyment that it shall everywhere meet the laws of taste. It is the perfection of the product that pleases, and this perfection seeks after a complete and elegant form. Hence, elegance, as the condition of the highest pleasure, becomes a ruling quality in poetry.

In oratory, will is to be influenced; and this is accomplished chiefly through the energy of argument and emotion. The strength of the thought — not its intrinsic and latent strength, but its open, demonstrative power — is now the point of interest, and style is to be judged by its immediate, popular force. Those means are the

best, and those alone, which are most truly effective. Moral force, moving steadily toward a defined end, is the essential characteristic of oratory ; and this is energy.

Not only does no one of these qualities exclude the others, they are mutually dependent on each other, and one, when present in a high degree, involves a measure of the remaining two. Though the means of reaching these qualities of style are allied, we yet have occasion to speak of each separately.

## CHAPTER II.

## PERSPICUITY.

AMONG the qualities of a good style, perspicuity is plainly the most essential. It must accompany the writer in all forms of effort, and be found in every sentence. It is not, however, so much an absolute as a relative quality. What is plain to one audience may be obscure to another. The man and the child, the ignorant and the learned, cannot be addressed in the same language; and the perspicuity of composition is to be judged by the intelligence of those for whom it is designed. Perspicuity has reference to the ease, certainty, and precision with which the language yields the thought to those for whom it was expressed. It is not the nature of subjects, but the power of persons, which determines the perspicuity of any given treatment.

It is evident, that, to a wise man, the capacity of those whom he seeks either to instruct, please, or persuade must furnish the guide and law of action. Whatever this demands, he will patiently grant as the fundamental condition of success. Some forms of composition,

as the oration, have a most immediate and specific reference to given individuals, and, therefore, are levelled to their easy apprehension ; others, as is frequently the case with the essay and the poem, go in search of certain readers, and are not expected to furnish the fullest entertainment or instruction to any but a limited class. Readers of any given book constitute a more select circle than those who usually listen to any given address, and therefore the writer may presuppose in those for whom he writes higher powers than can the orator. The poem may rightly demand poetical insight ; and philosophy, the discipline of a trained mind. It is sufficient that composition finds a class to whom, through affinity of tastes or powers, it readily imparts its thought. The writer, therefore, in aiming at perspicuity, considers chiefly whether his own ideas have been lucidly expressed, while the orator must inquire whether the expression is open to the easy, pleasurable apprehension of given persons. The book determines the reader, the listener determines the oration.

The obscurity and difficulty of a subject can hardly be regarded as any just reason for the want of perspicuity ; indeed, they rather seem to constitute the demand for it. One is not bound to write ; if he must write obscurely, and therefore weakly and worthlessly, he is rather bound not to write. In proportion to the



embarrassments of the topic should the writer move cautiously and distinctly through it.

Perspicuity is that quality of style by which a clear thought, without loss, without enlargement, is lodged in clear language. It depends primarily on the method of the mind's action, and secondarily on the use of language. No formal rules, having chief reference to the instrument and methods of expression, can in any high degree secure it. It must spring from a strong, well-furnished, and well-disciplined mind. Confused thinking and confused expression cannot be readily distinguished in their results, and the latter will not often occur without the former. At this point, as at others, we see how deeply true rhetorical excellence is rooted in the mind, and how broad and thorough a culture it implies. The expression is the counterpart and measure of the thinking, and little can be done for the forms of thought except through thought itself. Formal directions are of slight avail; the mind must be quickened, and taught to do its work more thoroughly. Style, the outgrowth of the intellectual life, can only become clear, concise, and vigorous, as the intuitive and reflective powers themselves possess these characteristics. The strong and elastic step is the spontaneous movement of a full life.

He that would think clearly can neither be indolent

nor hasty. Indeed, haste is a very common result of indolence. The mind will either not investigate its opinions, or does it precipitately and carelessly, that it may again relapse into the quiet of dogmatism, substituting obstinacy for conviction.

Thinking also proceeds so frequently in the interest of some passion, marshalling arguments for a given conclusion, shaping reasons so as to reach a specific end, that candid inquiry and just apprehension, and hence the most perspicuous expression, are impossible. False views, and the worst emotions, may, indeed, be perspicuously expressed; but they are not likely to be. Man usually strives to throw the semblance of plausibility and virtue over his beliefs and action, and in doing this, the thought becomes partial and sophistical. An imposing and decorous phraseology is made to disguise the opinions which it seems to express. Men will not come to the light, lest their deeds be reproved, is the explanation of much confused argumentation. The vigor of all parts of man's nature is requisite to the most successful action of any.

Right aims and thorough methods are the conditions of just thinking, which is the most perspicuous thinking. Obscurity arises from that rapid glance of the mind by which it seems to behold without fully grasping its object. The eye at no time rests protractedly upon a

single portion of the field, till it has mapped it in a completed survey. The act of expression hurries the process of thought; the seeming progress which is made, when a form of words is reached, deceives the mind, and leaves it satisfied with the shadowy semblance of things.

In passing from the clear sunlight into a dark cave, we see but obscurely, in flickering outline, the objects about us. If we commence instantly our description, we can scarcely expect that the impression which we shall impart will be more accurate. It is necessary that the eye should rest where it falls, till angles and surfaces, projections and crevices, come out from the darkness, and stand rightly grouped before it. Thus he who would think clearly must make tarry within the light of a reflective mind the subject in hand till it stands in clear outline. All, then, that trains the mind to severe thinking, and the heart to right feeling, prepares the way for perspicuous utterance.

While an honest and disciplined mind is the general condition of perspicuity, there are in each effort of composition more immediate and specific conditions. Some of these we shall mention: the first is a distinct apprehension of the thing proposed, of the end to be reached. This condition is equally important, whatever that end may be, whether the communication of thought, the

imparting of pleasure, or persuasion. The object is often not early or definitely enough conceived by the mind to give form to the composition. The writer is said to "write himself clear;" that is, the exact relation of ideas is seen at the close, and not at the commencement, of the effort. This may be frequently unavoidable; but it is evident that the mind cannot most directly and succinctly present a subject till it has defined the topic, and seen its bearings. The more specific and individual the object, the more strict will be the test furnished every sentence, and the more definite the law of arrangement.

What is termed the throwing out of ideas is an indolent and relatively a confused process. Concentration, definiteness of purpose,—this is that which gives order and direction to the mind, and sets it on systematic effort. Even in poetry, the more single and individual the product, the more perfect does it promise to become.

In this choice of an end there is also involved, as a second condition, a clear discernment of the means by which it is to be reached. The two must go together. It is the end which defines and arranges the means. All questions of method are understandingly settled only when we have an explicit apprehension of the object proposed. It is the want of this which so often gives vagueness and generality to discourse, a conflicting

and erratic character to the essay. The highest perspicuity can only be reached in connection with severe unity. Every part thus complements, sustains, and expounds every other, and the mind, undiverted, approaches by every movement one step nearer the end.

Not only must the end and the means by which it is to be reached be present to the mind, they must often be clearly expressed as well as thoroughly contained in the composition. When success depends on the distinctness with which the steps of thought are taken, the mind of the listener must be aided, that the movement may be most rapid, easy, and perfect. It is not sufficient, therefore, for the highest perspicuity, that the relations and line of connection are in themselves perfect; the auditor needs to be forewarned of the object in view, and to have his attention directly drawn to the successive steps through which it is reached. The general relations of the discussion are thus brought to the surface, and the listener led to direct his full attention to its successive stages. Without this general anatomy of the theme, considerable reflection is often required to discern relations in themselves most severe and logical.

This formal statement of the subject and its divisions is often thought to be mechanical, and to preclude the highest artistic products. The skeleton of the oration, it is said, should be contained in, rather than thus

raised upon, the composition. In poetry this is uniformly the case, since the life-like effect is here of preëminent moment, and delighted contemplation, rather than rapid apprehension, is aimed at. In forms of composition addressed more directly to the intellect, it is, however, the ligaments and relations of thought which especially invite attention, and there is needed no apology for presenting these in bold relief. In the oration much ingenuity may be exercised in announcing the subject, and in passing from part to part of the discourse without abruptly suspending the whole movement, and inserting those arbitrary notices of change — firstly, secondly, thirdly. Even these, however, are better than a transition so carefully covered as not to be distinctly and at once observed. Transitions clearly marking the progress of thought are a third important condition of perspicuity.

This clearness of a production, taken as a whole, is much more important than the perspicuity of single sentences; since the mind experiences more difficulty in grasping and relating the whole than in a careful consideration of detached portions; since the gain is slight if parts are understood, while their purpose and relations are not seen; and since, with the general object full in view, obscure sentences can either be comprehended, or, without much loss, be neglected.

Sentences, the rudimentary parts of discourse, are — as compared with their grouping, first into members, and then into a whole — likely to receive too much attention.

A chief instrument of perspicuous thought, and yet more of perspicuous expression, is comparison. The mind adds the unknown to the known by inquiring into agreements and differences. Each new fact takes its place in the classifications of knowledge by its relations to those already present there. The mind is constantly explaining to itself the new, is penetrating it with a more thorough analysis, by an accurate determination of its agreements and disagreements with the old. Thinking involves, therefore, constant comparison; and the breadth, justness, and clearness with which this is done measure the power of the mind. Hasty, superficial resemblances are a constant source of error; radical, though often remote, agreements, the foundations of truth. The thoughtful mind is in every step, therefore, trained to comparison, and the precision with which this is instituted marks the perspicuity of its movement.

Comparison, in its two forms of resemblance and antithesis, being so fundamental a step in investigation and comprehension, must also play an important part in presentation. Though essentially the same principles underlie inquiry and instruction, — the getting and the imparting of knowledge, — the latter receives some modifications.

from the different relations which the mind of the reader or listener may sustain to the subject. It is not now so much the radical comparisons of philosophy, liable to be equally obscure in both their branches, that are sought, as those more general agreements, which, finding one member already lodged in the popular apprehension, pass thence to the other and more obscure member. The mind is no longer busy with its own processes, inquiring into inherent and intimate relations, but is striving within the compass of general knowledge to find a vantage point from which to spring an arch over into the more obscure domain of truth, to discover something of which it may say, "Look ye here; see this; it is like that of which I am speaking." A certain aptness and interest in the agreements of things remote are now sought, rather than the thorough resemblance of things closely allied.

The comparison of discourse is always under this limitation, that it must find its starting point among things well known. With this restriction, the more severe and philosophic it may be, the more correct and perspicuous is it. Perspicuity is reached by illustrative comparisons, and these, in their just forms, involve inherent agreements. By an error at this point, that which is seemingly perspicuous is really most fallacious and obscure. Comparisons which hold to the senses, but not to the



mind, which involve transient agreements with radical differences, offer subtle means of deception. Just in proportion as the illustrative comparison slips from philosophy into fancy, does it become dangerous and obscure. Its seeming light adds to the darkness. Like a flickering candle in the night, it makes the gloom only the more impenetrable.

The comparison may also be used for vivacity, — for the beauty of its glowing imagery. Here there is more license in the resemblance, since both branches of the comparison are now relatively well understood, and the aim is rather to delight by the corresponding lustre of remote things than to instruct by the agreement of allied things.

The use of comparison is very much a habit of thought. The mind observes and treasures up resemblances; it relates and unites diverse things, and thus can reach a given end from many different starting points. It has an eye for harmonies, and marks them in the progress of physical and spiritual forces. So intimate is the connection of style with thought, that the method of thinking must, in a large degree, be the method of presentation, and the relations of the expression be imaged by the interior relations of the ideas. Style is chiefly to be affected through that discipline which controls the mind. The habits of observation and investiga-

tion give the imagery of discourse. The mind stored with comparisons by its own methods of inquiry, can hardly fail to use them.

The comparison is a formal figure, pointing out distinctly, and often at length, the agreement or contrast between two things. This fits it for clear, unimpassioned presentation, for quiet, yet earnest, explanation. There is in it activity and warmth of thought rather than emotion. The antithesis may present its subject in strong, brilliant outline; but it is throughout a most perspicuous, intellectual process, and requires the composure of reason to preserve its balance and make it a presentation, not a distortion, of the subject. Of the two forms, antithesis is the more striking. Marked contrasts are less frequently observed, and more affect the mind, than marked agreements. Our judgments are almost wholly relative, and we form our highest estimate of any quality by contrasting it with its opposite.

We now come to those conditions of perspicuity which are more strictly external. Chief among these are the choice of words, the number of words, and their arrangement. These are the divisions given by Campbell under *vivacity*, for which we here find place. The fact is, that the qualities of good style are so allied, that what secures one helps to secure all, and the same points discussed in somewhat different relations are applicable to

**all.** Choice of words is important in securing each excellency of style.

The writer is regulated in his choice of words principally by the subject discussed; the speaker, by the persons addressed. Science has found necessary for precision many new words. These have a limited and technical meaning. The careful philosophical essay must often employ these for the precise and accurate expression of its meaning. These qualities give law to its language, and though, at first, there may seem to be thrown a heavier burden on the reader, he has no right to complain of what is necessary to a more just understanding of the subject. Ease must give way to accuracy, and to combine the two in the highest degree is the excellency of the writer. While composition on its philosophical side is governed by precision, on its popular side it is controlled by ease of apprehension. The formula for the one is, Be precise, and thereby be understood; for the other, Be understood, and therewith seek precision. Technical phraseology may be in the essay, when rightly employed, most perspicuous; perspicuous discourse must be most simple in the words used.

Simple words, in the present meaning, are those readily understood by the mass of men. They are the only appropriate, as they are the only perspicuous, words in discourse. Simplicity may have, however, a broader

meaning, — the use of those words which most readily, most directly, convey the meaning to the minds addressed, — and thus belong to all perspicuous composition. *Specific* as opposed to *abstract*, and *familiar* as opposed to *unusual* words, render the idea most accessible to all minds. It is not so frequently the difficulty or depth of the thought that removes it from the popular apprehension, as the strangeness of the language in which it is expressed. Many radical principles may be stated and elucidated, many weighty truths discussed and urged, if the language and illustrations employed are level to the audience. There is usually shrewdness enough to catch ideas, when these are not disguised and estranged by unfamiliar phraseology.

The process of education may, in this respect, unfit the speaker for the task afterward laid upon him. He acquires the vocabulary of schools and books rather than of popular life, and gives to every discussion a technical turn, which removes it from the language and feelings of the people. Every principle of practical interest, as every radical principle is, can be discussed and pressed as a powerful motive, provided that discourse unfolds it on its practical side, in its familiar bearings, and not speculatively as the member of a system.

The speaker must start with the people, enlarge,

correct, and apply their views. He must, therefore, be familiar with their words, their thoughts, the imagery of their life and minds. To bring forth scholarly thoughts in their original speculative forms, is to invite a popular audience to an entertainment in which they can have little part or interest; the crane feasts the fox in his own long-necked dish.

Some men discover this, and fall into an opposite and worse fault. Drollery, extravagance, stories, are made to furnish amusement, and the lightest possible dash of substantial truth is deemed sufficient for popular effect. The discourse is perspicuous, but comparatively worthless. Rarely, very rarely, need one lay aside a good thought as too difficult of apprehension. Find its practical bearings, its familiar applications, and through these it can be approached with great certainty and interest. Discourse, to be thoroughly perspicuous, must be communicated in the speech of common life, not in those abstract and general terms which serve the purposes of reflection.

In no department of oratory is this more manifest than in the pulpit. A certain unreality and estrangement from daily experience belong to spiritual ideas. Add to this a theological turn of expression, a set use of peculiar words ever liable to lapse into cant, the solemnity of the Sabbath and the church, and though the

sermon may seem to be perspicuous, to be perfectly understood, the most weighty truths have in fact fallen on the mind with little or no influence. We may account for this in various ways, but we think it largely due to a want of real perspicuity. We know that certain forms of speech, in themselves clear and weighty, can be repeated till they convey little or no idea. Reclothe the thoughts in a more immediate and pressing form, and they resume their power. Religious truth is often not perspicuously urged, because not urged under those intimate and searching and changing relations which it really sustains to daily life. When any great department makes the impression of a supersensual and speculative region, it is not understood. One cannot be perspicuous without a thoroughly penetrating view of the radical, living connections of truth. Theoretical men may philosophize, but the orator must know and feel truth on its practical side as well. It is not the statics so much as the dynamics of life that he is to expound and control. Things are plain enough, and we must give to our thoughts the perspicuity of facts, and then they will become effective. This sort of clearness is the foundation of energy.

In the choice of words, it is evident that purity will greatly aid perspicuity. The original Anglo-Saxon element of our language has been chiefly retained by

the people, and is now its clearest, strongest portion. Here, again, education may without care weaken our vocabulary, substituting classical derivatives for our native speech.

A second verbal point on which perspicuity depends is the number of words. A cumbersome, involved expression, though containing the idea, is less clear than one more concise. The mind is embarrassed by words which have no essential office. The more divested the sentence is of superfluities, the more separately and singly does the thought stand forth. When the point of comprehension, of fair and succinct statement, has been reached, all beyond wearies and confuses the mind. In the search for something more, it loses sight, in part, of what it had. Amplification is, indeed, a most essential power in oratory, but this is neither cumbersome nor repetitious. Copious, no less than concise, expression should keep the words directly in the line of thought; we incline to the one or the other according to the rapidity of movement of which the listener is capable. We can neither fall behind nor outstrip him without weakening attention. Slowness is not simply opposed to energy, — it is also unfavorable to apprehension.

The last means of perspicuity is arrangement. This expresses the grammatical connections of the sentence,

and must, therefore, conform closely to them. Punctuation is a further means of expressing these relations, but is so liable to error and change, that it ought to be as little as possible relied on. It is designed rather to give quickness of apprehension to the reader, than intelligibility to the writer. So far as the grammar of a sentence is concerned, its clearness depends chiefly on the simplicity of the construction, the precision of the arrangement, and the reference of pronouns. As regards perspicuity, the length of a sentence is not of as much moment as the character of its construction. It is the complex dependences, the involved relations, the assertion sliding on from point to point, that embarrass the mind, tripping it in the meshes of grammar. Retain the same simple form of affirmation, and the sentence may be long, yet clear. It is the steady, easy hand with which its grammar is managed which carries perspicuity through a sentence.

To mark the dependence of adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional clauses, position is relied on. The last two have more license of arrangement than the first, and are, therefore, more open to obscurity. There are frequently opportunities for a double reference. It is in these cases especially that the dependence must be strictly marked. As in the rabble of modern speech, the noun and verb no longer clothe their dependants in



the livery of inflection, each must gather to itself its retinue in close attendance.

The relative pronoun, having little to mark the connection with its antecedent, is confined in its reference to the sentence to which it belongs, and is further restricted in position. If the antecedent is a prominent noun, it may sufficiently attach the pronoun, though other nouns intervene; if not, the relative should immediately follow. The personal pronoun, though more closely connected with its antecedent by gender, number, and person, is also liable to ambiguous reference, and the more so as the range of its reference is enlarged to preceding sentences. We say sentences: it cannot, however, revert far without obscurity, unless the connection is marked and sustained by the frequent intervening use of the pronoun. Narrative may maintain the reference when continuous for some time. When any intervening matter has suspended it, the noun should again be introduced. The perspicuity and dignity of narrative are better secured by a frequent use of the noun. The demonstrative *this* is often used with obscure reference, chiefly because it refers, not to a person or thing, but to some sentiment or principle. This principle has frequently not received a distinct statement, but only been hinted at, or involved in, what has been said. The mind, therefore, expounds the

comprehensive pronoun with uncertainty. It is usually better distinctly to enunciate the doctrine or notion, before this sort of reference is admitted.

Perspicuity is a relative quality. It is judged by the end in view. It may, therefore, be found in excess. To push lucid explanation beyond what is requisite for apprehension is wearisome. This power of comprehension known to exist, or rightly presumed to exist, varies with every form of composition. The speaker is most strongly and definitely bound by a fact, — a given degree of intelligence which he must know and regard. With those who are capable of profiting by it, a suggestive rather than an exhaustive style is preferable, as it gives a more independent, fresh, and profitable movement to the mind of the listener. There is more pleasure in the light and shade of morning than in the even glow of noonday.

Memory also often demands a compact statement, though it may require much afterthought fully to understand it. Thus knowledge is made portable in aphorisms and proverbs, and the speaker gathers up his discussion in a few terse sentences, which first require the whole discourse for their explanation, and afterward retain it. Subjects, divisions, and compends may be perspicuous only in their connections, being designed to

fasten attention and aid memory, — to contain, rather than to expound, the theme.

It has also been observed that where persuasion is aimed at, the very end in view will not always suffer the highest perspicuity. An absurd yet common opinion or custom is to be exposed: if unsparing argument and ridicule are employed, pride is aroused, and obstinacy excited. Men are ashamed to accept conclusions which have in them so much censure and contempt for their past conduct; they are unwilling to believe that they and so many have been grossly mistaken, and resist to the utmost the unpleasant conviction. They try to do by obstinacy what they cannot do by argument. We are all slow to make an unconditional surrender. If a retreat is left open to vanity, we silently draw off our forces without acknowledging even to ourselves a defeat. It is often easier to add a second mistake than to cancel the first by a frank concession. When the aim is to win those addressed, they are not so much to be driven as persuaded. The prejudices and passions are not to be at once aroused by undisguised attack, but principles are to be established, and truths insinuated, that shall lead the mind by its own action to the right conclusion, and make the result seem to be one of its own acceptance. Unpitiful argument, censure, and rebuke can only be used as a last resort toward those who are

to be aroused and forced to action, or against open and determined enemies, not so much for their sake as a means of influence with third persons. The preacher especially needs to know what kind of perspicuity is persuasive, what effective for the end proposed.

## CHAPTER III.

## ELEGANCE.

ELEGANCE is more frequently employed to express a polished and refined style than a simple and natural one; to denote acquired, than native graces. It is here used to cover all in composition that gives pleasure to taste, both in the matter brought forward and in its method of presentation, or, more accurately, in the matter as presented. The object of taste is beauty in its fuller and more restricted forms, in itself and in its elements. That composition may give pleasure to taste, there must be beauty in the conception, and skill and ease in the execution; matter and manner must combine to make the product elegant. The more excellent either alone may be, the more conscious are we of any discord between them. Homely matter in homely phrase may possess much power; shift the one without the other, impart refinement to the words merely, and the whole becomes ridiculous. In treating of elegance, we have, therefore, as much to speak of its basis in the

mind's action, as of those methods which native grace is sure to adopt.

Elegance rests chiefly on richness and delicacy of feeling. It has but little connection with simply reasoning processes. Its intellectual side is intuitive — a direct, immediate perception of qualities interpreted by the emotions which they arouse. One might as well expect to understand the power of music without feeling it, as to perceive beauty without the love of it. The more diversified and sensitive one's emotional nature, the more rapid and certain will be his judgment in questions which ultimately make their appeal to feeling. Moral problems are often interpreted and solved by generous, just feeling, quite as quickly and surely as by unimpassioned speculation.

Elegance depends principally on the management of emotional elements; it is, therefore, an essential excellence in poetry. Here nothing can take its place, since to fail in giving pleasure, to fall short of the harmony of concurrent feeling, of inwrapping the heart in elevated sentiment, is to forfeit the very end for which poetry is instituted. In the philosophical essay, elegance takes a wholly secondary position. In the anatomical room, we forget the beauty of the living structure. Elegance is now little more than the most straightforward statement of simple facts — is but the

lustre of perspicuity. In the narrative essay, as history, especially when the discussion of causes is forgotten, and the sequence of facts followed, the movement is that of free living forces, and the beauty and grace of life gather about the theme. Here lies an important distinction between history and the novel. In the one narrative, the facts are præminent; but that they may be facts, they must be the entire, the living facts, clothed as far as possible with the emotion of the hour. In the other, the feelings are uppermost, and the flexible narrative goes and comes so as best to reveal these, the real, the vital forces of life. The truth of principles belongs to the good novel; the truth of facts and principles, to history.

In oratory, elegance is not only secondary to energy, but taste, when it is in the least degree fastidious, when it is nervous, may decidedly interfere with success. Elegance partakes too much of form, and too little of substance, has reference too much to an ideal and too little to a practical end, to be a controlling quality in oratory. When men are content to be elegant, and not succeed, rather than be a little less elegant, and succeed, taste merely weakens and emasculates speech. Elegance is a method, a manner, and can never be opposed to an end. Reach the end, and do it with as much taste as may be. A querulous and pedantic, or a fondling

criticism, that trims and soothes everything, is of little use, and gives its possessor much superfluous trouble. It ought not to be said, that there is any inherent conflict between elegance and energy. They frequently sustain each other. The apparent disagreement between them arises often from mistaking the end of oratory, and striving to give pleasure rather than to secure impression, and from the frequent want of cultivation in those addressed.

In the first case, beauty being aimed at, elegance comes to be the ruling quality of style, which it never properly can be in oratory. As true elegance, nay, truer, might have been found by imparting to the address a more determined style, pushing forward to its end. Weakness is not necessary to elegance, though elegance, sought for itself, often leads to it. There is a more sublime and stirring beauty in action than in rest. This enervating taste is corrected by imparting a more external and practical end. The tasks which fall to working men are in all departments more or less homely. Dainty men are usually indolent fops.

In the second case, the orator finds in the audience a blunt, undisciplined taste. He cannot throw his pearls before swine. As a wise man, he draws imagery, illustration, and appeal from familiar fields, and with less beauty, but more energy, presses forward. That criticism



is maudlin, which, in the pulpit or on the platform, cuts off the speaker from the most immediate and full success. Immediate and permanent success sets law to the effort, and no gains of taste merely can atone for its want. It rarely calls, however, for a violation of taste; it chiefly leads to a partial oversight. It should also be borne in mind, that a breach of taste may excite attention and win a rude applause, and yet do mischief. In proportion as intelligence and cultivation gain ground, elegance and energy concur in their effects, and the most energetic becomes the most elegant form of action.

Minds differ much from each other in the delicacy of their apprehensions and quickness of their susceptibilities. Some lie sluggish and heavy under all the subtler influences and lighter movements by which grace and beauty are expressed; while others, as if endowed with a new, more universal and perfect sense, like a brilliant flower, cull from the common light all its rarest tints. This delicate perception is an indispensable requisite for all composition in any high degree elegant, and, bestowed in its rudiments by nature, is, like every other power, largely dependent on cultivation.

Exercise is ever the chief means of discipline; and for this, in the department of taste, the opportunities

are abundant. The careful observation called for in connection with the natural sciences is one of the best methods of securing that intimacy with, and interest in, Nature, which render us open to her lessons of beauty. The materials of taste here exist in the greatest profusion and abundance; in individual objects and in the grouping of objects; in obscure and in palpable forms; in parts and in perfected wholes; in suggestion and realization; in sound, movement, color, and form; and in all these gathered into one compound and lavish utterance. The great storehouse of illustration, comparison, metaphor, is Nature; and by a familiarity with her concealed and open processes we shall find the more obscure workings of thought, the darker flow of abstract things, lighted up by a thousand resemblances. This study of the external world will avail little, unless we bring to it a mind that has a productive habit, and that, too, in the line of letters. Food nourishes the active, growing part, whatever that may be, and he who uses what he gets also acquires the power to get readily what he uses. The same objects are looked upon with very diverse reference, and therefore diverse effect. The literary mind finds the play of thought in external objects, and through them gives play to thought. What seems to be an effect is often most efficient among the coöperative causes. The exercise of an

activity is the reason rather than the result of its nourishment.

As composition deals more with men than things, and deals with them under a more stringent law of propriety, elegance especially demands a knowledge of men, — of their passions and impulses. If we would present character in its many varieties, — if we would approach it through its many avenues, — if we would twist into the cord by which we bind men to our purposes those golden threads which a knowledge of occasions and persons can alone supply, — we must move among men, and know them. We must learn to apprehend, without sharing, that which is base and selfish; and sharing, to feel the influence of every generous, life-giving impulse. Thus we escape those straitened methods and chronic opinions which our own bias or peculiar training may have imparted. The ease and grace of management which a knowledge of men imparts are proverbial. There is, however, this most important limitation — the sincerity and freedom of individual action must not thereby be lost. Here, again, we come to the same principle; we get to *use*, and the earnestness of using preserves us from the dangers of getting. Without this a cold and courtly polish may cast a chilling elegance over our decayed life. No intercourse is so healthy as that with men, men of all sorts, for an

earnest spirit; none so dangerous for a vacant one. The controlling power of every truly elegant product is the individual life. This will often, by its own spontaneous strength, secure elegance against every difficulty.

A last means of discipline which we mention, is familiarity with the best literature. Excellence in each department is so far peculiar, that it must be chiefly acquired by study within its own field. Every good workman must learn his own trade; and not less must every inspired poet and orator catch his inspiration from poetry and oratory. The chief power of every virtue is a sort of induction by which it begets a like or proximate state in every one who beholds it. Contact with that which is excellent, nearness to that which has power, intimacy with that which has grace, give play to this silent force of virtue by which it scatters seeds and shoots in all adjacent soil. The lower grace of manners springs up insensibly as we share the society of those possessing it; so the higher grace, which bespeaks a mind easily moving through the whole range of its thought. Familiarity with feeble novelists will add this to its many other injuries, that the mind, habituated to a false or languid style, will lose sight of true excellence, and content itself with that which long companionship has made agreeable. He who is intimate

with the best productions of the human mind, while meeting with the largest return in thought, also finds that that preëminence of method which has long been his admiration has quickened and prospered his own exertions. In all this discipline there is the most constant action and reaction between the mind and the objects before it. It chooses them in part from what it itself is, and becomes more and more like the objects it has chosen. Between the active mind and its food there is an adaptation, a play of appetite and digestive use, which prevent it from becoming either a gross gormandizer or a dyspeptic. The elixir of health, and therefore of beauty, is that principle which sets our power, our knowledge, "in act and use."

The intrinsic beauty of the theme itself is not in any great degree a subject of choice, except in poetry. In most forms of composition, elegance must show itself more in the method than in the matter of discourse. We come, then, to those characteristics in composition which mark it as elegant. Beauty shows itself in the fitness and perfection of relations, since these are instituted by the artist, and reveal his power.

The first of these relations is that between the style and the subject. Each theme has its own characteristics, and seeks for a sympathy of manner in the expression. That treatment is most elegant which most thoroughly

individualizes the topic, brings it forth under its own specific forms, features, and coloring. A method essentially the same in all departments reveals at once the inflexible barren mood of the mind. For all its thoughts it has one obdurate mould, and sends each new product forth with the old mill mark upon it. The freshness and variety of nature are thus lost. There is no nice discernment of character, no careful reflection of transient feeling. Every subject is weighed in the same rude scale-pan, and gets the taint of the market. The illimitable scope of nature is thus lost: the grave, the sublime, the solemn; the earnest, the enthusiastic, the inspired; the pleasant, the gay, the merry, — all march to the same step. With violent inversion, according to the mood of the man, low comedy takes the place of sober discussion, or pompous and emphatic assertion, of simple statement.

This harmony between the inherent quality of the topic and the style can only be reached when the mind stands in close connection and sympathy with the subject. The language will thus flow forth, colored and impregnated with the peculiar properties of the theme. This congruity will show itself, not merely in the general method employed, but especially in illustration and ornament. A style indiscriminately ornate reveals a crude or vulgar taste. Economy of ornament, and its

strict subservience to the end aimed at, discover the masterly and chaste quality of the mind. The luxuriance of youth is not, indeed, to be rejected, as it gives scope to the sober, pruning hand of age, and helps to save style from those bald forms into which the barren fancy sinks. Imagery — which is the growth of earnest emotion, — which is the vitality of the heart filling with flowers each vacant spot — may indeed be abundant, and, in its spontaneous life, most beautiful. This is quite different from that overwrought style which deals in perpetual hyperbole, and sees none of the poor people and poor facts which lie in its way. The fare of the mind, like that of the body, must be plain, to be wholesome. The mind should truly value the subject, not feel that its task is to make, by adroit rhetoric, something out of it.

In this relation of the theme and style may also be included harmony and rhythm of sound. The more emotional the theme, the more does it seek this, till, in the gems of poetry, it almost reaches the melody of music. In discourse it becomes a wholly secondary and undefined element, little more than what has already been spoken of as harmony of style. Words as sounds merely somewhat govern each other ; so inferior a claim, however, cannot be greatly heeded in the earnest movement of discourse.

A second relation is that between the parts of compo-

sition to each other, and to the whole. A right relation here is in some respects the most rare and costly beauty of style. To manage the theme as a whole requires reflection, and is more requisite to success than the skilful handling of every part. The ground plan of the building goes far to determine the possibilities of the structure. It is easier to elaborate and ornament the parts than to think long on the design; but not till the outline is reached does the law of the building appear; afterward all is natural and inevitable. Fragments are more readily produced than wholes. The steadiness with which the mind rests upon and works out the main idea marks its power. Here there is not much difference between the highest poetry and oratory. The epic and dramatic poet must remember the plot, must in each scene heighten and hasten the catastrophe, or the oneness of the work is lost. In the oration, the introduction cannot linger, the argument cannot pause, nor the passion cool: all must work together in the result, — all be proportional parts of a well-proportioned whole.

This fact of proportion, however, does not define, by any invariable law, either the number or the length of the parts. These points are settled by the peculiarities of each case. Each product has its own proportions, but proportion it must have. Excess and deficiency are equally fatal to symmetry. That no necessary part may



be wanting, and none over-treated, the mind must dwell patiently on the end and the means before it. An undivided impulse must pervade the entire effort. The treatment once undertaken must be completed. A logical method, promising severe investigation, cannot drop away into a popular strain and ready assumption. The parts must be proportionate, continuous, and concurrent; that is, harmoniously developed toward a single end. The production thus acquires the elegance of a living whole. In unfolding the subject, the grace of transitions becomes a point of moment. We before saw that they should be clear; they should also reveal the natural connection of the parts. We thus see that elegance is not extrinsic, but intrinsic; not superinduced, but educed; not local, gathered here and there into fascicles of figures and knots of imagery, but pervasive and inclusive. It is the general merit that at once stimulates and disguises the merits of the parts.

Another set of relations is found between the discourse and the persons and circumstances connected with it. We shall have occasion, in connection with "Energy," to speak of the adaptation of the motives of discourse to those addressed. The adaptation now spoken of is of a more delicate character. It is not simply that the line of thought is perspicuous and pertinent, level to the intellects and feelings of the audience,

but that it also indicates familiarity with the transient feelings and passing circumstances of the persons and occasion. It is the skilful handling of little things which shows refined perception, takes from the treatment its cold, rugged character, and makes way for it in the affections. The more keenly and delicately alive the heart of the speaker is to the exigencies and peculiarities of the case, the more does discourse depart from generalities, and become the fit and elegant outgrowth of the time and place. It is this ease and ductility of method by which it winds in and out of every opportunity, gathers up all influences and impressions by the way, that make it pleasing as well as powerful, and doubly powerful because it is pleasing. The speaker is frequently too careless about the nice adjustments of thought. Content with facts and principles that demand assent, he fails to make way for them, he puts them bluntly. He forgets that conviction, cheerful assent, are the result of a complex and growing process; that attention must be aroused by this method and by that; the heart opened and softened on this side and on that, and home arguments not be urged till the mind is ready for them. It is this delicate insinuation, this patient and affectionate approach, that make composition apt and elegant.

Under this relation of persons there is a second

adaptation of discourse to the person whose it is. Here is naturalness, the noble virtue of simplicity, which prompts to a genuine, frank, earnest expression of our own convictions. This excellence of style rests chiefly on sincerity, the striving after an internal rather than an external end; or, rather, an aiming to secure an external effect by a hearty rendering of an internal impression. Personal conviction and interest precede and govern expression; the lips speak what the mind knows and feels. Everything being honest in the mind's movement, its grasp and government of the topic are honestly rendered, and whatever else the treatment wants, we feel that it is genuine.

This penetration of action by the character of the agent is far from being disagreeable, especially when it arises unconsciously and inevitably from the straightforward way in which thought has sprung up. This grace comes unconsciously into style, if it comes at all, and, like many other qualities, is only to be secured by that radical culture which modifies and makes the man. There is no more comprehensive and just direction for reaching true elegance than to be frank and earnest, than to have and express a genuine life. It is not primarily a thing of polish, of courtly phrase, found oftenest with vanity and pride. The face that is truly

fine is painted from within; the style that is truly elegant is formed and animated from within.

It is life that works best and most beautifully in the world; it has merit in its homely as well as in its perfected forms. An affected and an imitative style are directly opposed to this excellence.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ENERGY.

ENERGY, the third quality of style, expresses the force and vigor of composition, — the power with which it reaches its end. It is a leading quality of discourse, since this aims at an immediate and thorough effect. It springs chiefly from the will and desires, and is measured by their strength. The desires so direct and seal the will, that the tenacity of the latter must be determined by the firmness of the former. We speak of the desires: this language ought not, however, to imply any inherent distinction in them. They differ from each other in the objects which excite them, rather than in the feeling excited. From the very constitution of the mind, it cannot be indifferent toward its own good, its own enjoyment. It belongs to the very nature of happiness to impart desire, and this desire logically extends itself to all objects and actions which are found to be the conditions of pleasure.

We would not say that the desire comes first, and that the enjoyment arises from its gratification, but that

certain appetites and powers furnish us pleasure, and that this pleasure inspires desire for the objects with which it is connected. The enjoyments of the mind, like those of the body, arise independently of the desires, and enkindle them. But desire, though exclusively directed toward things capable of affording some independent pleasure, is not always proportioned to the value thus attaching to them. It may, as in avarice, acquire a constitutional hold on the mind, aside from any good to be realized in possession.

As the motive power of life is furnished by the appetites, passions, and affections, the energy with which the mind is driven in any direction must depend on their vigor. The will goes forth to determine and execute what these propose and prompt; the firmness of desires, however, depends very much on their character as well as on their original strength. The appetites and passions are more fluctuating than the affections, since they have a greater variety of objects, and are easily cloyed. The seeker of pleasure changes his specific purposes, since the relations in which objects stand to his gratification are constantly changing. Certain objects, which are the constant means of a wide circle of enjoyment,—indeed, may enhance all pleasure,—are especially capable, by their pervasive hold on desire, of calling forth exertion. Thus the desires for wealth and for power are

peculiarly exacting. Other desires, by the increasing and noble character of the good conferred, become more and more permanent. Of this kind are those for knowledge and virtue. The stability of the desires, therefore, will depend much on the character of the thing pursued. The firmness secured by virtue has often been evinced, when the choice has been forced on the mind between that and everything else — between that and life. The martyr has found it a pleasure to cling to his integrity.

The will also, like every other power, is strengthened by use, and weakened by inaction and defeat. The habits and training of the man will go far to determine his present power of purpose. The uncurbed and desultory will is obstinate rather than strong. It works with fitful and irregular energy, but does not know how to choose a path, and rein every power into it. It is thus that obedience becomes the school of command. The just will of another accepted lends regularity and government to the mind, till the purposes of the individual, becoming steady and restrained, are able to accept the authority made ready to the hand. The unsteady impulses of the feelings must find a balance-wheel somewhere, must be subjected to the discreet and powerful influence of some ruling desire, before the mind can respond with steady energy to the demands

made upon it. The mind must come under dominion, government, before it can be an effective instrument for obtaining government. Energy is the pressure of disciplined impulses.

Though energy in action and energy in speech are essentially the same, in the mental constitution and training which they imply, they are not so in the desires which nourish them. The pursuit of wealth and of power bears no comparison with that of virtue in the aid which they render discourse. A man may work most vigorously within the line of his own interests, but the motives which govern him are so far selfish and limited. They can, therefore, rarely be urged upon others, and must often be hidden from them. Selfish aims less frequently than benevolent ones seek the aid of discourse, and furnish much less of its material. The speaker who pursues private ends must either appeal to selfish impulses which make a poor appearance, and are more or less in conflict and self-destructive, or he must go out of the range of his own desires in finding the means of persuasion, and thus lose much of the zeal and energy with which the topic ought to be urged; or he must disguise and misrepresent the motives of action, and involve himself in all the tortuous, perplexed paths of evil. Those desires, therefore, which are fitted to infuse life into oratory, to inspire and



impassion poetry even, must have breadth, philanthropy, and virtue in them, or they cannot address common interests, or enkindle common feelings. The great ideas of justice, the public weal, liberty, and virtue must fully penetrate the mind, arouse the heart, and furnish the desires those objects fitted to call forth and nourish speech. According to the intensity of the desire with which common ends, the interests of public and private well-being, are pursued, will be the energy of discourse. Virtue must rely chiefly on persuasion, and has ever at hand the means, and also the motives to employ it. That training which deepens and strengthens virtuous desire, and brings the will under its steady government, gives to the man, in its most reliable form, all the working power of his nature, impresses all his words with his own life, his own energy.

The definiteness of the immediate end chosen also adds to strength. A clear perception of the connection and order of means by which a distant object is to be reached is most requisite to settled, decisive effort. While feeling impels, it cannot take the place of clear, explicit guidance. On the distinctness with which the immediate effect is conceived, and its relations to an ultimate good, will depend the directness and efficiency of the means employed. Severe and logical discipline of the faculties gives precision, and thus energy,

to their action. It is here pulpit oratory often fails. The general, generic end of virtue is not clearly enough resolved into the specific objects which it includes, which are means to it. The aim is not definite enough to arouse and concentrate the mind. The argument and the application are general, and fail of the pungency of more pointed discourse. The specific end should share the elevation of the general aim, and the general aim be sought with the directness of a specific purpose. To such disciplined desires every subject yields its strength; the sinewy parts rise to the surface as when an athlete wrestles.

Energy, according to the kind and aim of composition, assumes three forms — strength, vivacity, and vigor. Every thoroughly logical process has in it the energy of strength. The premises and conclusions are wrought into each other, and the mind is pushed irresistibly forward. It may refuse to think, but while true to itself, it cannot escape conviction. This is the native energy of thought — of truth perspicuously stated.

At another time energy softens down into the vivacity of the imagination when aroused and warmed by feeling. It becomes poetical inspiration, an impassioned frame of mind, throwing rapidly into life-like forms the objects of contemplation.

Energy, in its strongest character, is that vigor with which a purpose is conceived and executed ; with which principles are shaped into proof, and pushed into conviction, by which deep feeling is thrown into strong currents, compelling action. The first two forms arise respectively under the intellect and the feelings ; the third includes these, and carries them forward in the pursuit of a purpose : it is the whole man developed into action.

The qualities of thought by which energy in composition is secured are thoroughness, rapidity, and directness. Thoroughness starts the movement with acknowledged principles, and so far leaves no opportunity for retreat. These it unfolds consecutively, and, by steady approaches, forces and secures each position. Without that vigor of thought by which the whole subject is brought into the light, no absolute proof can be reached ; and proof is the foundation of all strength. Darkness always affords a lurking place for doubt. Within the intellect, that light must be kindled which is to justify and guide every step.

So far as the condition of insight will suffer it, the movement of thought must be rapid. Rapidity marks energy, and imparts it. He who is in earnest will not tarry long. To linger in any part of the topic cools the feelings, induces a meditative or a listless state, and

results in rest, not action. The progress must be sufficient to excite and maintain a glow of feeling. Especially must there be a tendency to accelerated motion as the end of the discourse is approached. The earlier parts are more deliberative, and involve proof: this being furnished, the mind is warmed into conviction, and now justifies to itself the haste of feeling. The speaker must, inevitably, as principles are unfolded in their immediate application, gather the interest and earnestness of a present undertaking: this growth of feeling is requisite to carry the audience over all obstacles into the desired action. Nothing can be more destructive of persuasion than the loss of feeling as the discourse progresses. Whenever the highest point is reached, the power, as then greatest, should be turned to the work in hand. The movement in the outset may be slow, and even a little tedious, without serious injury; but at the end it must be accelerated, earnest, impetuous. It becomes an important caution, not, in the beginning, to arouse the emotions when they must of necessity fall away, nor to prolong discourse when it has been ripened for the end. This concentration of discourse by a uniformly accelerated movement, by a growth and accumulation of feeling, is one of the highest powers of oratory, and, when united with directness, makes its effect well nigh irresistible. Without it there is no

moral momentum, no enthusiasm. This rapidity is almost sure to arise when argument is infused with feeling, and employed solely for the end in view. A languid state, or a nervous desire to say all that can be said, is inevitably destructive of it.

A third characteristic of energetic thought is directness. The movement is not only thorough and rapid,—it is in a straight line through the most efficient motives to the immediate end. Each thing that is said is not only pertinent to the topic, but to the object in view; is presented not only with vivacity, but in its direct bearings on the action at issue. Directness is especially characteristic of oratory; since this kind of composition receives its form from an immediate, external end, and must discern and shape itself to the right line by which this is reached.

Discourse may lose its directness by an undue enlargement of either of the means it employs. Argument and feeling, the intellectual and emotional elements, are each with oratory simply and purely means to an end, and therefore to be governed by it. Either of these elements is liable, through the constitutional bias of the speaker, through vanity, through weakness or uncertainty of purpose, to break from its proper restraint, and become a primary instead of a subsidiary aim. Discourse may be too logical, too reflective, too analytic,

may occupy the mind with subtle distinctions, and displace the admissions of the popular mind with intricate and superfluous proof. It thus becomes philosophical, instead of oratorical, entangles itself in secondary matter, and weakens the power of the whole. It cheats itself with a partial, when a complete success was before it. This is the constant danger of the educated and reflective mind. It loves truth and doctrine too much for their own sakes. It delights itself, and strives to delight others, with speculative relations, with its own views in a strictly intellectual realm. It seems a clipping and humbling of knowledge to employ it solely as an instrument for daily uses, never to bring it before the audience for its own sake, for the intrinsic perfection of its interior relations. The mind that worships truth is slow to make it a servant, that it may wash the bruised feet of the way-worn traveller. Yet the desire of substituting an intellectual for a practical end must be perfectly overcome, before the mind is ready for oratory. It must devote—I, will not say humble—all its resources unreservedly and unhesitatingly to the end in view.

The second element, that of emotion, may be turned from the task assigned it, and employed for an esthetic end. The composition thus becomes poetical rather than oratorical, and though much feeling may be aroused,

much interest elicited, they are put to no use. The audience are pleased, but character and conduct remain the same. The imagination has free scope, the heart is feasted, but the will is not nerved. The emasculated oration does the work of a novel. This error of discourse arises often from the vanity of the speaker, and nourishes the indolence of all parties. It becomes fatal according to the greatness and urgency of the end proposed. It is, therefore, in pulpit oratory especially, the most inexcusable of faults.

It is ever to be remembered, that oratory is chiefly to be judged by its immediate effect, and, therefore, that any symmetry of parts, or finish of execution, that weakens the impression, is a fault, rather than an excellence. Argument and ornament, matter and style, must submit themselves to the purpose of the speaker. Interior perfection in an instrument is of little value, if it does not serve the purpose for which it was made. There is at this point often prevalent a very false taste. A certain classical excellence is aimed at, as if there were in this more true merit than in the patient submission of the theme and the method to the wants of those addressed. Efficiency and elegance, when rightly understood, rest on the same quality — a nice adjustment of discourse to its object. No useful thing can be commended by taste till there is found in it a perfect

discharge of its offices. It is under this law, that its beauty is to be realized.

The most submissive oratory is animated by the noblest impulses. There is in it no display, no dalliance with poetical delights, no indulgence of philosophy, but a cheerful, earnest prosecution of labor, the evoking and strengthening of right impulses in others. Rebuke does not become harsh, nor wit scathing, nor opinion sensorious, nor imagination prodigal; but love softens and blends all, and with genial, vital warmth, carries the truth over to the intellects and hearts of men. In this oratory of practical benevolence, this thorough permeation of every word with a generous and hearty purpose, there is far more life and true elegance than can possibly be reached in the cold realm of artistic effort. Since oratory cannot much enlarge itself in the region of mere selfishness, but must seek common and broad interests, philanthropy—a just estimate and love of men—will always be its unconscious vital power, and any form of self-assertion its danger. It is love which removes anger, the irritating edge of censure; love that finds secondary and less worthy motives, and unites them under the higher motive; love that turns all influence into persuasion, and directs that persuasion towards virtue. This is most obviously and thoroughly true of pulpit oratory. We doubt not, however, that a great



difficulty with discourse in other forms is, that it is too often made to turn on limited and selfish ends, that the mind is too contracted and personal in its aims to discover the true strength of the subject. The popular mind quickly feels and yields to the steady pressure of a benevolent purpose.

Energetic thought possesses in a greater or less degree these three elements — thoroughness, rapidity, and directness; and as, in turn, each is preëminent, that energy will assume the form of strength, of vivacity, or of vigor. Thoroughness is more an intellectual quality; this predominating, we have the strength of the logician. Rapidity arises from the flexibility and life of feeling; this in the ascendancy gives the vivacity of poetry. Directness is dependent on the fixedness of desire and will; this controlling, we have the vigor of the orator. In no production are these qualities so fully contained, and evenly adjusted, as in oratory.

We have now to speak of the more external characteristics of an energetic style. Here we have occasion for the divisions employed under perspicuity, though each is considered from a different point. The energy of language will depend on the choice, number, and arrangement of words. It is obvious in the outset, that the strength of style will be closely connected with the precision of the words chosen. This, however, has

been sufficiently referred to under "Perspicuity." The vivacity of the expression will depend very much on speciality. The most specific, individual word is to be chosen as opposed to the more general, generic word. The reason of this is obvious. The one word contains a complete description, a precise image, and the imagination at once constructs the picture: the other word includes the object or action with many others, and therefore defines none of them perfectly. The imagination does no more than the word, and leaves the picture vague and general. To say, "He *shoved* the boat from the shore," is descriptive of the manner of the action; to say, "He *removed* the boat from the shore," tells us nothing of the method, but only the fact. We need, as much as possible, to deal with concrete, living things, and not with abstractions; we wish, then, the individual, not the generic word. Science loves to overlook differences, and limit its view to single points of agreement, and thus constructs the skeleton of philosophy; poetry and life reverse the process, and re clothe objects with their distinctive features and beauties. A scientific style has not enough imagination in it, enough nearness to living things, enough vivacity, to animate and please the popular mind.

The vigor of expression will depend on the strength of the words chosen. The word must be adequate

to the office it has to discharge. Weak words cannot be the vehicle of strong emotion. The strength of the word is principally to be determined by the feeling it is called to utter. We are not confined to a simple statement of facts, but, in our language concerning them, may also express the emotions which they have aroused. Speech thus frequently employs hyperbole, and carries the word beyond the fact, seeking thus to reveal the impression it has made upon the mind. The vigorous speaker searches for strong, full words to convey his own conception of the subject.

This sort of energy is often sought by language disproportionate to the occasion. There are two things to be expressed—the facts, and the feelings concerning them. Language which is true to either of these cannot be greatly at fault. As it is easier, however, to compass heroic expression than heroic feeling, strong words than delicate and profound sensibilities, an effort is often and most ineffectively made to replace the latter with the former. The overstrained expression, losing application and honesty, becomes the mere semblance of strength, and in the end most false and wearisome. No style is more thoroughly weak than one unduly strong, as no feelings are usually more vapid than those which dwell in hyperbole.

This is seen in asseverations and epithets. The

strongest and most stable authority expresses its commands in the most simple and direct form. In proportion as threat, expostulation, and assurance are added, do we distrust the power, or the intention of execution. Strength, firmness, and truth are too self-confident to make much ado. A statement that is enforced with many asseverations, in its very form indicates a consciousness of weakness. A heavy prop against a building gives promise of a fall, though we may not yet detect the seams. This principle, however, suffers limitation. There is admissible a dignified and proper assertion of what in itself seems doubtful. The mind may thus mark the certainty of the thing, and the depth of its own conviction.

An epithet is an adjective which expresses a quality well known to exist in the noun to which it is attached. Thus the adjective *glorious*, as applied to the sun, is an epithet. Such adjectives convey no information, and are used to magnify the noun, to distend and impress the idea. They have, therefore, only rare application, and are the constant resort of weak and trite thought. The office of language is to utter what is in the idea, not to magnify it into something other or more than itself. Strong thinking is more essential to strong expression than strong expression to strong thinking. The mind is often best pleased with simple and subdued

language, when the magnitude of the thought alone occupies it.

A second consideration is the number of words. Energy, even more than perspicuity, is dependent on conciseness. Without it there cannot be that rapidity of movement, that concentration of force, mentioned above. Yet strength is not gained by condensation, when this proceeds in the least beyond the limits of perspicuity. In the essay, the demands of perspicuity and energy are essentially the same. In the discourse, the aim is much more frequently to enforce that which is familiar than to present that which is new. Everything must be judged by the impression it makes, not by its logical relations to that which has preceded. It is not so much the return of ideas, that is now to be guarded against, as the repetition of trite, unimpressive forms. The actual advance of the idea in the new sentence, the new illustration, may be very small, and yet the gain to the feelings be quite perceptible. Amplification — the power to unfold on diverse sides and in diverse directions a single cardinal thought, till it occupies the mind and resumes its hold on the heart — is a chief excellence of oratory. Progress — a rapid passing from idea to idea — becomes in a measure dangerous: there is no hold secured by the topic. The mind needs to dwell, without halting,

on a thought, till its practical bearings are fully impressed upon it. It is with our most familiar ideas that oratory has chiefly to do—from these that its motives are derived. A mere statement, therefore, of what is already more or less present to the mind, will make but little impression. The subject must be taken up anew, the half-forgotten path retrodden, and the topic brought home with fresh and living impressions. Mere repetitions will not accomplish this; no more will unceasing transition from thought to thought. A single, central idea is to renew its hold on the mind; and this can only be done by a treatment which amplifies the subject and clings to it. Novelty and instruction are only the occasional, not the habitual, aids of oratory. Our progress, then, is not to be measured in the straight line of logic, but in the growth of feeling. Monotony, diffuseness, tread the same circle round and round; power, conciseness, return again and again to the thought, but from an advanced, a higher point. The mind ascends along a spiral to the culminating impression aimed at. Oratory does not differ from other forms of composition in not requiring conciseness, but in determining what is concise or otherwise by the exigencies of feeling, and not of thought. All that does not bear the emotions onward, even though it occupy the thoughts, encumbers the discourse, and is an extra burden to be borne by it.

The faults most commonly opposed to conciseness are tautology, pleonasm, and verbosity. These words, as usually employed, do not exclusively denote faulty forms of expression. A sentence may be tautological, pleonastic, or verbose, when judged merely by the thought, and yet thereby be the more vigorous. Intense passion is, from its very nature, tautological; it clings to the object of contemplation. Many words are thrown into a sentence, not to amplify the thought, but to modify our feelings concerning it. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" is a familiar example. If, therefore, we are to use these words to denote faults exclusively, we must have reference both to thought and impression. Tautology thus becomes unnecessary repetition. This, by a slight change of words, is often disguised from the writer himself. An event, with a modification of expression, is assigned as the cause or the effect of itself.

Pleonasm is the use of superfluous words, and is corrected by excision; verbosity, a cumbersome expression, to be corrected by restatement. Verbosity differs from verbiage. The one is a reflection on the style, the other on the thought.

What has been said requires this further caution, that impression is less frequently reached by lengthy forms and an accumulation of words than is often supposed.

A heavily-laden style is almost sure to be feeble. Better occasionally to fall short of perspicuity than often to transcend it. At this point a knowledge of men and occasions, with a mastery of the topic and a practical interest in it, can alone save from error. Our knowledge prevents diffuse and weak handling; our interest in results corrects unimpassioned and protracted proof.

A third consideration in energy is the arrangement of words. All parts of the sentence are not equally prominent, equally important. The more weighty words, therefore, must, as far as possible, be assigned the more emphatic positions. These are the beginning and the end of the sentence, especially the latter. A significant and pregnant word should gather up and close the assertion, and give the sentence a full cadence. Pains must also be taken to scatter and conceal particles in the middle of the sentence. They thus become less conspicuous, and less interrupt the flow of the thought. It is frequently forgotten that the very succession of sentences sufficiently marks many forms of dependence, and renders introductory conjunctions unnecessary.

Inversion, also, not merely because it assigns an important position to an emphatic word, but because it is inversion, often gives freshness and power to the expression. Yet this, like all unusual methods, can only be occasionally employed. Style becomes affected and



quaint if inversion passes much beyond what custom sanctions.

Under the arrangement of words belongs the division of sentences into the period, and loose sentence. The criterion of the former is, that if a pause be made at any point before the end, the meaning is not complete. The reverse is true in the loose sentence. The dependence in the former is reciprocal between the earlier and later parts; in the loose sentence the later portions may be dependent on the earlier, but the earlier are not dependent on the later.

The period retains the idea till it closes, and then brings it at once before the mind. Its force, like that of the hammer, is stored up till the last instant, and then delivered in a blow. There belong to it strength and dignity. The loose sentence is more easy, and, if not long, more vivacious. If either predominates in style, its character will become correspondingly affected. The period is too formal for the highest energy, which requires a more simple and curt expression. The more marked and impressive any method, as a carefully wrought climax, the less can it become an ever-returning method. The direct and unobtrusive forms must be the staple of composition. Style should be left, in the first instance, to the spontaneous action of thought; afterward, in its critical consideration, sentences should

be recast, as variety and harmony may require. The inventive and critical states of mind are too distinct to coexist. The one should follow the other, till the corrected becomes the habitual style of expression.

Energy will also depend on the figures employed. Tropical terms are a constant instrument of the impassioned mind. A trope is the use of one word for another on the ground of some connection between the two ideas indicated by them. The connections on which tropes proceed are very various, and have given rise to many technical names. The correct use of these may call for some analysis, and thus discipline the mind, but cannot serve any very important rhetorical purpose. The principles which include tropes in all their varieties are essentially the same. By means of this natural and inevitable association and substitution of ideas, style gains many obvious advantages. The eye has under its range all adjacent fields, and by some connection of resemblance, or dependence, or partnership, suddenly forsakes the thing spoken of, and puts as its representative a more fresh and glowing image. The fancy is winged; it moves everywhere, and plucks every flower for its wreath. The subject cannot languish, since all related themes minister to its illustration and embellishment. A constant succession of images arouses and pleases the mind. The barrenness of one point is re-

lieved by the freshness of another, and from all sides come trooping in the *dramatis personæ*.

The mind is interested by the resemblance or connection of ideas; the light of comparison is thrown upon the subject; a more striking is substituted for a less striking object, the animate for the inanimate, things sensible for things intelligible, the specific for the general. The abstract nature of the subject is thus evaded, and the imagination brought into full play. All this is accomplished without the addition of a single word. The rapid, free, and often brilliant way in which the trope does its work has drawn much attention to it, and assigned it a conspicuous position in rhetoric.

"I love the man, I hate the viceroy," makes the scene animate throughout. The imagination, by a bold effort, evokes from one two distinct persons, and sets them over against each other as objects of affection and aversion. The fancy thus clothes every subject with the vivid imagery suggested by its attributes, and moves constantly in a world of living and related things. Tropes are the product and food of passion. To one's own faults we add the historic infamy of an Arnold or a Judas by a simple designation under these hated names.

Adjectives, nouns, verbs, and adverbs are vehicles of tropical expression. The action we affirm of an object,

the qualities we assign it, at once give distinctness and character to the image. Verbs and adjectives cannot be too carefully chosen. The right appellative is a sentence in itself.

Tropes are partially subject to use. This is shown in the fact that they cannot be fully transferred from language to language, nor from one term to a kindred one in the same language. The *string* of discourse cannot be used for the *thread* of discourse; nor, It *rounds* with my idea, for, It *squares* with my idea. Tropes have all degrees of vivacity — sometimes shooting the most brilliant light, sometimes scarcely luminous. This arises from a difference in original aptness, and from the fact that a trope, by repetition, rapidly loses its power, till at length it has only the force of a proper term. When the word becomes directly associated with its new idea, the original connection is lost sight of, and the term sinks into the growing ranks of simply grammatical tropes. Just at the transition period, and a little before it, the trope is even more trite than the proper term. There is a certain worn-out gentility about it that puts it to disadvantage with plain homespun. Good tropes or none should be the general rule. When the road becomes a little weary, the more direct we make it the better. Tropes may readily so overload the subject with

imagery as to distract the mind ; or, possessing it with a poetic intoxication, unfit it for stern, straightforward movement. A few clarion notes startle the ear more than a constant bray of trumpets. Simplicity is the fundamental rule everywhere, above all, with energetic working thoughts.

Among other figures which energy often employs may be mentioned hyperbole, personification, apostrophe. These are all the offspring of passion — the means which it has found of expression. Hence the rule for them all becomes the same : That the feeling of the speaker and the audience must make them natural. Otherwise, they are ridiculous.

The highest energy in discourse will not suffer reading. There is a want of spontaneous and immediate impression, of perfect and impassioned connection with the audience and occasion, of free, reciprocal action between the speaker and listener, which cannot be wholly overcome. This is most obvious in those figures of discourse which seem to be the insight and inspiration of the moment — the glow of the mind that utters them. They need to be sustained by the supposition, that they have just flashed upon the thought. It is evident that the highest directness and warmth can be given to speech only when it is, or seems to be, the communication of our immediate sentiments. Nature and cultiva-

tion, the thoughtful judgments of the past, and the inspiration of the present, unite in the oration to produce a powerful and impassioned product — the fulness of rhetorical effort, the ripest fruit of our intellectual and moral life.

# INDEX.

---

## A.

ADDRESS, its objects, 22; order, 23;  
kinds, 24.  
Adverbs, dependence of, 202.  
Affections, 40.  
Analogy, 144.  
Anglo-Saxon words, 200.  
Antithesis, 198. •  
Arguments, nature of, choice and ar-  
rangement, 63; kinds of, 78.  
Arrangement of words, 201, 242.  
Art, what, 9; relation to science, 10;  
those subsidiary to rhetoric, 14.  
Asseverations, 237.

## B.

Bar, legal oratory, 50.  
Barbarism, 152; kinds, 153.  
Burden of proof, 84.

## C.

Calculation of chances, 75.  
Canons of, 144.  
Capacity of audience, 185.  
Choice of words, 197, 235; of argu-  
ments, 86.  
Common life, language of, 199.  
Comparisons, 193.  
Composition, what, 13; departments  
of, 20.  
Compounds, 156; rules for construc-  
tion, 157.

Conjunctions, solecism in, 171.  
Consciousness, form of proof, 65.  
Conventional phrases, 149.  
Criticism on language, 143.

## D.

Declension, marks of, 160.  
Deduction, 78.  
Definiteness of end, 227.  
Deliberative eloquence, 49.  
Desires connected with energy, 223.  
Development of composition, 25.  
Directness, 231.  
Discipline of taste, 211.  
Drollery, 199.

## E.

Education, effect on words, 198.  
Elegance, 182; how secured, 207.  
Eloquence, nature of, 60.  
Emotions, kinds, and how aroused, 95.  
Energy, 182; how reached, 223.  
Epithets, 237.  
Etymology, 146.  
Experience, what, 68.

## F.

Fallacies, 68, 71, 92.  
Feeling, at the disposal of orator, 105,  
107; connection with elegance, 208.

Figures, connection with energy, 244.  
Foreign words, 152.

## H.

Humor, what, 119; contrasted with wit, 120.

## I.

Imagination, office of, 113.  
Improprieties, 172; disadvantages of, 177.  
Induction, 78.  
Influence, law of, 55.  
Interest, as a motive, 42; warping language, 188.  
Introductions, office of, 100.  
Intuitions, what, 64.

## L.

Language, relation to thought, 125; changes of, 128; constituents of, 129.  
Literature, knowledge of, 214.  
Loose sentence, 243.

## M.

Man, knowledge of, 213.  
Means of composition, 53.  
Memory, form of proof, 65; office of, 117; how addressed, 117.

## N.

Nature, knowledge of, 212.  
Novel, what, 30.  
Number of words, 201, 239.

## O.

Obscurity of subject, 186; ever opposite, 204.

Opinion, confounded with observation, 74; opinions the audience have of speakers, 96.

Oratory, relation to ends and means, and its kinds, 36.

## P.

Partisan feeling, 98.  
Passion, 41.  
Passive verb, 170.  
Period, 243.  
Permanence of literature, 136.  
Perspicuity, 181; how secured, 185.  
Philosophy of art, of rhetoric, what, 12; advantages of, 19.  
Plan, 191.  
Pleasure, as a motive, 41.  
Pleonasm, 241.  
Poetry, what, and relations, 32.  
Progress, in oration, 110.  
Pronouns, reference of, 203.  
Proof, sources of, 64; kinds, 77; pertinent, 83.  
Propriety, 136; why regarded, 136.  
Prose, forms of, 28.  
Provincialisms, 153.  
Principle, what relations of, 11.  
Purity, what, 136; importance of, 174.

## Q.

Qualities of style, 181; relation to each other, 209.

## R.

Rapidity, 229.  
Reason, form of proof, 67.  
Relation, between style and subject, 215; between parts and whole, 217; discourse and circumstances, 219; discourse and speaker, 221.  
Rhetoric, what, 13; steps by which reached, 14.  
Ridicule, what, 123; office of, 123.  
Right, as a motive, 39.



Right, as a law of influence, 56.  
 Rule, what, and relations of, 11; relation to nature, 16; relation to genius, 17; relation to success, 17.

## S.

Science, what, 9; relation to arts, 12.  
 Senses, form of proof, 64.  
 Skill, what, 10.  
 Solecism, canon on, 148; what, 159; disadvantages of, 175; examples of, 163.  
 Speciality, 236.  
 Strength, 228.  
 Style, what, 179; kinds, 180; qualities of, 181.  
 Subjunctive, 163.  
 Success, dependent on right, 57.  
 Symmetry, 138.  
 Sympathy, importance of, 95; methods of securing, 102.  
 Synonymes, 173.

## T.

Tautology, 241.  
 Tenses, laws of, 165; errors in, 168.

Testimony, form of proof, 74.  
 Thoroughness, 229.  
 Tropes, 246.

## U.

Univocal words, 147.  
 Use, what, 134; qualities of, 136; how established, 140; divided use, 142.

## V.

Verbosity, 241.  
 Vigor, 229.  
 Virtue, connected with energy, 227.  
 Vivacity, 228.  
 Vivid ideas, how secured, 115.  
 Vulgarisms, 153.

## W.

Will, connected with energy, 225.  
 Wit, what, 119; dangers of, 121; advantages of, 122.  
 Words, change in meaning, 130; in philosophy, 131; in poetry, 131; their strength, 236.



